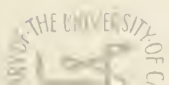




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Volume 1  
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# LETTERS FROM IRELAND,

1886.

BY

THE SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT OF  
*THE TIMES.*

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LONDON

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1887.

“ Much valuable material for the formation of sound opinion on the Irish question is to be found in the series of “ Letters from Ireland ” which are now appearing in the *Times*. ” — *Saturday Review*, Leading Article, October 16, 1886.



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## P R E F A C E.

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THE object of the tour which I undertook last autumn was to enquire into the state of Ireland socially and politically. The result will be found in the following pages. I trust the occasional references I have made to the great attractions which that country offers to the tourist, may induce some to spend their holiday there this year. Of one thing I can assure them—they need have no fear of being shot, or of meeting with any unpleasantness ; for though there is an unmeaning hatred of the Saxon in the aggregate, the individual Englishman is well and cordially received, and the more intercourse that takes place between the two peoples, the more likely is that hatred to disappear.

I am indebted to *The Times* for permission to republish the Letters.

THE WRITER.

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# LETTERS FROM IRELAND.

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## LETTER I.

*August 16.*

As we entered Dublin Bay on a lovely summer morning, it was difficult to realize that "the distressful country" lay before us, so smiling was the invitation it seemed to extend. But when the boat steamed up the river to her berth something of the illusion disappeared, and as I stepped ashore some old lines, which perhaps have never attained the dignity of insertion in *The Times*, involuntarily rose to my mind :—

"Oh! Dublin sure there is no doubtin'  
Is the finest city upon the say:  
'Tis there you'll hear O'Connell spoutin',  
And Lady Morgan makin' tay.

For it is the capital of the finest nation,  
That ever grew on a fruitful sod;  
Fightin' like divils for conciliation,  
And hatin' each other, for the love of God."

O'Connell and Lady Morgan have passed away, but the application of the last two lines remains as true as ever.

The excitement caused by Lord Aberdeen's departure has been eclipsed by the Belfast riots, and there is a very bitter feeling among the people against the Orangemen, while it does not seem to strike them that any blame whatever can be attached to the other party. "If it was the Irishmen in Cork or Limerick," said my jarvey, "they'd have been all shot long ago." "Belfast, that's supposed to be the most loyal part of the country," said another man, "is the only place in Ireland where you'll get a broken head. And they'll always be the same until they're put down." More moderate people admit that one side is about as bad as the other, while the Orangemen declare that the rioters have been boys and girls who are not under the control of their organization at all.

"He got a great going away," said another carman, referring to Lord Aberdeen, "and it'll be a long time before another Lord Liftinant gets such a settin' out. But there's a good many of opinion that he'll soon be back agin." And the instability of Governments has certainly impressed itself upon the Irish mind. The Loyalists, not unnaturally, consider that the late Viceroy would have acted



more consistently with his position as the representative of the Crown, if he had refused to allow himself to be made the object of what was in reality a Home Rule demonstration.

The aspect of Dublin itself bespoke depression. The streets were empty, the people listless, and even in the leading thoroughfares several shops were closed and to be let ; while those that remained open seemed to be doing little or nothing, and only holding on in hopes of better times. Trade was beginning to look up a little, I was told by a representative man, before Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule movement, and since the rejection of the Bill confidence has been somewhat restored. But it is not the capital only that has suffered, it is the same all through the country. There is no circulation of money, and prices of cattle, hay, and other produce, as compared with those of a few years back, are very low. The crops, however, are decidedly good, and if the weather is favourable there will be a good harvest.

With regard to Home Rule, there is no doubt the rejection of the Bill was a serious rebuff to the Nationalists, as they fully expected it to pass ; but they say it has now been made a party question in England ; that whereas there were only 85 Home Rule members there are now 285, and they

express themselves confident of the future. "It was a great thing to get shut of it," said an intelligent carman and Loyalist who drove me through part of the country. "They're knocked dumb, and haven't a word to say." "A great many didn't vote at all this time," he went on; "sure I heard some labouring men say they wouldn't vote agin Misther ——" (the Loyalist candidate), "for he always gave them work, and only for the priests whippin' them up the other wouldn't have got half what he did. They're not so fond of them as they were." "There's a great ruction here," he said presently, "about thim labourers' cottages. The farmers think very bad of giving up a bit of land for a poor man, and if they were in the landlords' coats how would it be for the labourers?" "You'd think they had no conscience thin," he continued, "with their talk about rent; but sure it's prached to them, and like barley to fowl it's very palatable." "That's where half of the money in the country goes," he exclaimed as we passed a workhouse, "the officers and guardians lavishing away, and don't care what they spend. It's a bad institution altogether."

Another man whom I met the same day told me the National League were working harder than ever, extending their organization, and making

every one subscribe. "I can't think how so many intelligent men can believe in it," he said, "and so many decent farmers go after Parnell." "He's got them a good deal already," I suggested. "Got them," he said, "nothin' but going into Court and spendin' money and confusion. Ever since this agitation commenced things has gone down and down, and worse and worse, and there isn't one of them that's as well off as when it began, and in my belief it's a judgment on them, like the pitaty famine that came after O'Connell."

As to the desire for Home Rule, it is generally admitted that the people care nothing for it, and only want the land. In the towns you have Nationalism pure and simple, and the local politicians who care nothing for the small farmer, and think the large ones nearly as bad as the landlords, agitate for Home Rule, partly as a means of increasing their personal importance, and partly from a sort of sentimental idea that if Ireland had a Parliament of her own she would become a great and glorious country:—

"Ireland as she ought to be,  
Great, glorious, and free :  
First flower of the earth,  
And first gem of the sea."

Nor must it be forgotten that the Irish have an innate love of politics. "I could do without 'atin'," said a Poor Law guardian to a landowner I met the other day, "and I *think* I could do without whisky; but I *couldn't* live without the politics."

I am told by a gentleman who knows the country well, and who is able to converse with the people in the West in their native tongue, that they are shrewd enough to see that they cannot get the land for nothing, but that their object is to beat it down and down until they can get it for a very low rate of purchase. The Parnellites know well that the land question is the backbone of their agitation, and in their last manifesto they desert the "one plank" platform and go back to the old cry of the rent and the land. The farmers find the despotism of the National League very severe, but as long as they subscribe to it and obey its laws they are allowed to live in peace, and it helps them to get a reduction of rent. If they hold out against it they have a hard fight. Here is a letter from a small Protestant farmer, whose rent is £16:—

Honrd. Sir,—I send you £4 and that is all I can do. I have tore the feet off the stock (*i.e.*, by driving them to fairs), and cannot sell them, but if I had joined the Land League I could sell at some price, so I have concider the matter.

A lady writes from the county Kerry :—

The people are extremely civil to us, more so than usual, overpowering us with welcomes and blessings, and though the man we evicted is in prison for cheating them all round and they hate him, yet the rule that no evicted farm is to be taken or worked is so strong that they won't break it. One man wants it, but said it would be as much as his life was worth to take it. One feels too much discouraged to have any plans for the people. They all lie so terribly here, one can't believe a single word any one says. This is not a *façon de parler*, but literally true down here. The police officer has just been lunching here and says he sees a great difference in the behaviour of the people since the elections; they are so civil, the young moonlighters taking off their hats to him with *empressement*. Either they are afraid of what is coming, or there is some "divilment" up.

This agrees with what a country hotel-keeper nearer Dublin told me—viz., that the people are not half as impudent as they were, whereas they were becoming intolerable, and saying they would have it all their own way. "But they are as determined as ever," he added.

I met a large farmer who has held his own in Kerry in spite of the war that has been waged against him. His hay was burnt, and he received some compensation, though not half what it was worth, and had to pay a still larger sum in county cess as compensation for other malicious injuries in the county. He has had threatening letters without end, and notices to the same effect posted

about his place. "It's a fearful thing," he said, "to have to keep the gun by your bed, and every one else in the house the same, and not be able to sleep. The moonlighting has got beyond the League; and what do they want with all the arms they are collecting? I wonder the police cannot do more with them."

I asked a gentleman who is on friendly terms with the Parnellite leaders what they would do if they got Home Rule. "Well," he said, "I think Parnell would very likely seize the opportunity to retire into private life, having got what he had promised. If not, he would be swept away by more extreme men. We should have them coming over in shoals from America; the country would be bankrupt; and it would be simply pandemonium."

"And what will they do if we have local self-government and county boards?" I asked. "They will not accept it," he said. "There are a great many clever fellows living by this, and living well, and they will not let it drop if they can help it."

In one respect only does the country seem to be in a better position than before the agitation—namely, that the people are not living on credit in the way they used, for the simple reason that

they cannot get it. They have to pay ready money at the village shops, and though they may not have wiped out all their old scores, they are keeping out of debt at present, except to the landlord. Many will tell you that the establishment of branch banks throughout the country was the greatest curse to the people. The farmers raised money on their holdings without difficulty. You saw three driving in together in a cart, one to borrow and two to go security; and when an Irishman gets money easily he never thinks about having to pay it back. But that is all over now, and to that extent the country may be said to be in a sounder position than it was.

But go where one will, there is a prevailing impression that the Emerald Isle is under a heavy cloud, and the silver lining is not yet apparent.

## LETTER II.

TIPPERARY, *August 20.*

TRAVELLING down by the Great Southern and Western Railway through the fertile plains of Kildare and Queen's County, I had some conversation with a priest, a moderate man, who had not been a follower of Mr. Parnell, but who became a Home Ruler when Mr. Gladstone's conversion made it appear within the range of practical politics. He considered it hopeless at the present day to try to rule a people against their wishes. It was all very well to talk of Ireland having the same laws as England and Scotland; those laws were in accordance with the wishes of the English and Scotch, but not of the Irish. When I asked what other or better laws an Irish Parliament would make, his ideas seemed rather vague. They would deal with taxation and education, he said, and, if there were no danger of England's retaliating, protection for a few years would be of great use in establishing home manufactures. He com-



plained, nevertheless, of the shaking of the railway carriage in which we were travelling, and said he always observed that the carriages ran much more smoothly on those of the Irish lines which got their rolling stock from England, and that if we had home manufactures they ought to be as good as the foreign. He considered the land system and absenteeism as the root of all evil, and hoped great things from peasant proprietorship even in the congested districts in the West. He did not think the landlords' property would be in danger of confiscation, direct or indirect, at the hands of an Irish Parliament. The violent attacks made on them at present were, he said, done with an object—to keep the thing going; but if once a Home Rule Parliament were established it would contain a strong Conservative element, there would be freedom of election instead of the present dictation, and men with a stake in the country would be returned rather than professional politicians like the sitting members. In fact, he seemed to think the whole nature of the movement would be changed, and the agitators of to-day would blossom into constitutional statesmen—a roseate view, for which it is not easy to see the foundation.

I broke my journey south in order to visit a gentleman in the county Tipperary who was badly boy-

cotted two or three years ago, but who fought it out, and in the end rather turned the tables on his would-be persecutors. He incurred considerable enmity long before the days of the Land League by taking farms into his own hands and working them on a large scale, and has been under constant police protection for nearly thirty years. The lower windows of his house are furnished with bullet-proof shutters, and when lights are lit inside, even on a summer's evening, all the shutters have to be rigorously closed. It will be easily imagined that here was a case in which the League was only too anxious to apply its ban, and the immediate occasion was found in some help given to caretakers on a boycotted farm in the neighbourhood.

A few days after, notices were posted in the district warning all persons to leave the employment of the obnoxious landlord, and forbidding any one to hold communication with him or his family. The following morning thirty-three out of thirty-five Roman Catholic labourers failed to put in an appearance, while some eight or nine, who were Protestants, disregarded the edict altogether. The deserters were given a week to reconsider their position, after which men were supplied by the Property Defence Association to take their place. Some police and hussars were sent down by the

Government, and farm operations carried on with soldiers patrolling the headlands. The lady members of the family set up a shop in the house to supply their labourers and dependents, and even brought round goods themselves in a market cart for delivery at the various houses. A forge was set up in the farmyard, stores were procured from London or Dublin, and the boycotted household made themselves in every way independent of the local tradesmen. Finding the keeping up of a shop in the house rather troublesome, they proceeded, after a time, to build one on the property, and installed some people from the neighbouring town, who had been boycotted for supplying them with bread, as shopkeepers. They are at present doing a very fair business; the shop looks well-stocked and prosperous, and any persons who are boycotted in the country round can supply their wants there. They can in like manner send their horses to be shod at the forge, and probably have not to do so a second time, as the local smiths are naturally unwilling to lose their trade in that manner. The labourers who left their employer were, of course, turned out of their houses, losing the grass of a cow, ground for potatoes, and many other advantages, and strangers were imported to take their place, while the compensation awarded to the unfortunate

men by the League only amounted to two or three weeks' wages. The local tradesmen have, of course, lost the custom of the family, which was not inconsiderable, while they supply themselves with better and cheaper goods from London and Dublin. In fact, the boycotters have themselves become boycotted; and the moral effect of such a victory in all the country round must be very great.

A large man can fight and win, but the farmers, unfortunately, are not in a position to make a successful stand against such an attack. One of this gentleman's tenants took a farm adjoining his own, from which another had been evicted for non-payment of two years' rent. He was boycotted, his fences were broken down, his cattle driven off, and he was annoyed in every possible way. He had to be guarded by eight policemen when he went to chapel, and his sons were sought out in Dublin, and pressure brought to bear on their employer to induce him to dismiss them. The system was too perfect, and the victim had to give in and surrender the farm, which is now stocked by the landlord—a curious result, when it is remembered that his original offence consisted in holding too much land himself.

It is extraordinary that the people should submit to a tyranny which is so injurious to their interests, preventing, as it does, farmers, shopkeepers, and

labourers alike from pursuing their lawful avocations and earning their daily bread. It is only to be accounted for by that want of backbone which is one of the most remarkable defects in the Irish character. They are afraid to assert themselves, and are driven like sheep, allowing themselves to be enrolled in organizations and societies which many of them inwardly hate and disapprove of as strongly as the most law-abiding of Her Majesty's subjects.

Being in Tipperary, I took the opportunity to visit the famous Rock of Cashel. Driving there from Goold's-cross Station, I passed the residence of Mrs. Morgan John O'Connell, daughter of the famous Bianconi, and related by marriage to the still more famous Liberator. She has herself been boycotted, but not beaten, and she looks with anything but an approving eye upon the present movement for Repeal. The Rock of Cashel stands out a splendid landmark, crowned with a noble pile of ruins, consisting of the cathedral, round tower, and Cormac's chapel, the two latter in most perfect preservation. This was the cathedral set on fire in 1495 by the Earl of Kildare, who made the well-known apology to the King, that he would not have done it if he had known that the Archbishop was not inside. A most extraordinary urchin, about sixteen years of age, acted as my guide. I asked

him what a curious hole in one of the steps leading to the belfry was for. "It was a bull put her foot through it," he said. "She was enchanted, and she knocked down every night what they built, and any man that'd kill her'd get a hatful of money; but she wasn't a bull at all." He pointed out a very fine Irish cross which had been put up by a Mr. Scully as his monument twelve months before his death. "He had to go through the House of Commons and the House of Lords," said my not very reliable informant, "before he got that, to get it so high." "He was a fine Catholic, sir," he said, "one of the finest in Ireland." He also gave me the startling intelligence that there was "fifty shillings now in the North for every Catholic's head that was beheaded." "The peelers," he said, "and those that were in it," told him, and he seemed fully to believe it.

About four miles from Cashel I visited the lands of Cloghleigh, containing some 1,400 acres, from which the tenants were evicted two years ago for non-payment of rent, and which are now worked by the Land Corporation. The evicted families are living in Land League huts adjoining their late holdings, and for some time they broke down the fences, trespassed on the lands, drove off cattle, threatened the company's men, and took forcible re-

possession of the houses from which they had been evicted. After a hard struggle, however, this has ceased, and local labourers are now working on the land. I walked all over it with the manager, a tall, sturdy north-countryman, who looked exactly the right man in the right place. The land had evidently been run out and neglected, but it is well stocked with sheep and cattle, and a good system of tillage has been inaugurated. If it had not been for such institutions as the Land Corporation and the Property Defence Association the League would have had things all their own way.

Driving through the town of Tipperary I saw the celebrated "Nuns' Field," as it has been called since the remarkable events which recently took place in connection with it. It adjoins the convent and was given up by the nuns, because they did not want it, eight years ago, when they exchanged a somewhat precarious tenure for a ninety-nine years' lease. Five years ago the Lawn-tennis Club were anxious to take it, but before letting it to them Mr. Smith Barry's agent inquired of the Lady-Superior whether she would have any objection, and ascertained that she had not. Early in the present year this was turned to account by the League, and paragraphs appeared in their papers headed in large type, "Eviction of the Nuns." Lawn-tennis began as usual, but one

day a mob appeared, headed by the priest and local band, and turned off the ladies and gentlemen who were playing. They did not return, and the field remains in Mr. Smith Barry's hands, a monument of intolerance and priestly tyranny.

My carman discoursed with considerable sense on the state of the country. "Boycotting was the worst thing ever invented," he said, "driving the gintlemin and their money out of the country; and if they aren't kept in it Ireland is done."



## LETTER III.

CORK, *August 25.*

THE sail down the river from Cork to Queenstown is worth a visit to Ireland in itself. The well-wooded banks rising up from the shore, the pleasant-looking villas, and the broad waters of the river combine to make it a charming expedition, if only the day be fine. Queenstown itself is beautifully situated on the face of a hill, and before it lies the splendid harbour which bears its name. At Cork the annual races were going-on, which caused some stir in the town, but the attendance was very small as compared with that of former years. The gentry have no money, and the country people seem to have lost their love of sport under a *régime* which proscribes even fox-hunting, of which they used to be so fond. I visited, too, the famous Blarney Castle, with its massive donjon tower, beautifully situated in the well-wooded demesne. The modern residence is as deserted as the old one, the owner, like so many of the great Irish proprietors, having

become an absentee within the last few years. In the village of Blarney is a tweed manufactory, carried on by Mr. Mahony, a brother of the celebrated Father Prout.

In my last letter I gave some account of boycotting as directed against a landlord in the county Tipperary, and in county Cork I have had some opportunity of seeing how it presses upon poorer men. One case, well-known in the West Riding, is that of a blacksmith, whose offence consists in having supplied a car last September to the police, when they were going to a seizure, though he was not aware of their mission at the time. He has suffered from the most virulent persecution, and his wife, who was a short time ago dangerously ill and supposed to be dying, was informed by her friends that the League would not allow her to be visited while alive, but in the event of her death they would be permitted to attend her wake and funeral; and, although her mother and a large family of brothers and sisters were living within a short distance, so great is the terrorism that they were, with one exception, afraid to come near her.

Another man in the same division of the county, who took a farm from which the former tenant had been evicted, says that whenever he travels outside his farm he is insulted and hooted and called a

“land-grabber.” He cannot go to mass on Sundays for fear of being insulted and assaulted on the way. His outhouses were burnt down last February, and his dwelling-house narrowly escaped destruction, his life and those of his family being nearly lost in the endeavour to save themselves.

A farmer in a very bad part of the county, close to Kerry, writes under date August 1 :—

I beg to inform you that boycotting is still practised towards me, and, I fear, likely to continue as long as I hold the farm at —, or until the Government proclaim or put down the Land League, whose laws are the only laws acknowledged here. You are, no doubt, aware that I am under police protection, and were these withdrawn I am persuaded that my existence in this world would be limited indeed. I may state that I have not attended Divine service for over twelve months, as my presence there would most certainly lead to bad results. It was only this day (Sunday) that I heard of notices being posted on the Roman Catholic chapel gate threatening a woman in the locality, whose only offence was attending to my daughter-in-law during her recent confinement.

As another instance of the intimidation that is practised, I may give the following letter from a local butcher, also dated August of this year :—

Sir,—I would have sent you a reply long before now, but I was inquiring to know if I could supply you with beef and mutton, and the answer I got from the committee of the Land League was that if I supplied — with any beef or mutton I would be hunted out of —. I hope you won't feel dis-

pleased with me for not supplying you, but, as you are aware yourself, the slightest word that is said at present to a man in business will prevent people from dealing with him. I would be only very glad to supply you, and I hope I can supply you before long.

I came across one case of a man who took a farm in 1878, before the Land League was established, the grazing of which had been taken the two previous years by a prominent Leaguer, but from which a tenant had formerly been evicted. He was boycotted in 1880, and repeatedly visited by Moonlighters, who endeavoured to intimidate him by firing shots round his house. A police hut was erected on the farm and protection afforded him. He was unable to buy or sell, or to procure the necessaries of life. His family were persecuted and hooted; the master whose school was attended by his children was warned not to receive them, and they had to give up going. After six years of such existence he could stand it no longer. He sold the interest of his farm and sailed for America only a few days ago, and it seems intolerable that honest hard-working men should not be able to live in the country and pursue their avocations in peace.

Two printed handbills, circulated by a local branch of the League in this county have come into my possession. The first is as follows:—

Irish National League.

Bartlemy and Rathcormac.

Shopkeepers, tradesmen, and labourers are requested to have no dealings of any kind with Captain St. Leger Barry, his agent, T. Ryall, and his three sons.

God save Ireland!

And at the bottom is a written postscript:—

We expect this caution will be sufficient.

This was followed by another bill, calculated to prove more efficacious:—

£5 Reward.

Shopkeepers, Farmers, Tradesmen, Car-owners, and Labourers are strictly requested to have no dealings of any kind with the following persons—viz., that writ-serving little despot O'Riordan, solicitor, of the firm of O'Riordan and Mandeville, of Fermoy and Mitchelstown, and the clique who are assisting him in his dirty work, Captain St. Leger Barry, his agent, T. Ryall, and his two sons, John and Robert Ryall.

The above reward will be paid to any person who shall give such information as shall lead to the detection of the backsliders and others who are assisting the abovenamed in their felonious landlordism.

God save Ireland.

These instances are sufficient to show that the organization of the League is strong in the county Cork, but the action of the Cork Defence Union has been most valuable in supporting boycotted persons and enabling them to live. It purchases their cattle and farm produce, supplies them with

men and machinery, as well as food and other necessaries, subsidizes local blacksmiths on condition that they work for any one who wishes to employ them, and counteracts the operations of the League in every possible way. A gentleman who undertook to buy boycotted cattle for the Union in his locality, provided they were brought into the open market, gave me a lively description of his first experience. He came into the fair after a prominent member of the League had gone through pointing out the boycotted cattle, and priced and bought them all. They were driven up to the station surrounded by a cordon of forty police, half of whom were in plain clothes, and followed by a hooting, yelling, and hissing mob, who did their best to separate the cattle and mix them with others, but without success, and he has since been able to buy without active interference. The fact that there are few outrages now committed in this county is a testimony to the perfection to which the machinery of the League has been brought. A gentleman who is fully conversant with it says :—

The existing peaceable state of this part of the country may be safely attributed to the fact that the inhabitants are held in the iron grasp of the League, whose orders they dare not venture to disobey, and as long as this reign of terror exists so long will personal liberty and freedom of action remain suspended.

Another gentleman, who has had some 2,000 tenants under him, as agent, during the last forty years, and has not evicted half a dozen, tells me that from what the people say to him in confidence he believes the suppression of the League would be the most popular act, and that if a genuine poll could be taken 80 per cent. would be in favour of it.

“If it were suppressed,” he said, “we should get rid of politics and turn our minds to industry. The people are longing to take the vacant farms, and the value they set on the land may be gathered from the sums they are giving for the tenant-right.”

Another gentleman, a Roman Catholic, well acquainted with the country, expressed himself precisely to the same effect. “I wish in God, sir,” the people say, “something could be done.” No doubt a considerable number would be glad to be relieved from such an iron rule, and to recover their individual liberty; but it is questionable whether the majority of the farming class would not be the other way, as they feel they have got large reductions of rent through the action of the League, and they hope to get still more.

One gentleman of considerable experience in the South and West, so far from suppressing the League, would allow them to blow off as much steam as

they like, but the moment they held any one up as an object for boycotting he would have them prosecuted and liable to summary conviction at the hands of resident magistrates.

It is a remarkable fact that since the decision of the country was given against Home Rule several sales have been effected to tenants under Lord Ashbourne's Act; and if once the farmers were disabused of the idea that they may get the land for nothing, or next to nothing, many of them would be only too ready to buy, and they would then become the most conservative people on the face of the earth. Some of the larger farmers might prosper well enough as freeholders, but the majority of Irish tenants are too dependent and helpless, and certainly have not as yet shown any of the qualities necessary for success as peasant proprietors; moreover, when once they became owners in fee there would be no check upon subdivision, which has been one of the greatest curses to the country.

It is generally anticipated that there will be a passive resistance to payment of rent in the autumn, and it will be difficult to know how best to meet it. It is easy enough to deal with those who can, but refuse to, pay a fair rent; but there is only too good reason to fear that many of the tenants, whether from their own fault or not, are hopelessly insolvent,



and the question is what to do with them. It is to be hoped that the landlords will take care, in the first place, that they are making a reasonable demand, considering the times, as they will then be standing on firm ground. There is no doubt that large reductions have been generally made throughout the country, though the Nationalists speak and write as if there had been none; but at the same time some few landlords have shut their eyes to facts, and have in consequence not only suffered severely themselves, but injured the cause of others who have been more considerate, by giving a handle to the National League. I have seen a letter from an eminent firm of London solicitors to an Irish land agent, from which one would suppose they had not read a newspaper for the last six years, and that there was no difficulty whatever in collecting rents in Ireland. They observe that it is a remarkable fact that English agents have no difficulty in collecting the full rent in Ireland, and request him to be good enough to remit the rents in future without any reduction, though one of their clients has been already practically ruined by pursuing the same short-sighted policy.

It is true that twenty or twenty-five years ago prices were as low as they are now, but the people lived in a very different way. In the good times,

when prices were too high, the farmers all increased their way of living, in many cases to an absurd extent. The small farmers took to white bread and tea instead of oatmeal and potatoes, and the large ones began to live like gentlemen. I have seen the wife of a tenant who professes to be unable to pay his rent, driving about in as smart a pony-carriage as any one could wish to see, and I have seen others who say they cannot make up anything for the landlord, living with every appearance of comfort and prosperity. The advice given by the League has, no doubt, been very acceptable. They have been told from a hundred platforms to provide for themselves and their families, and if anything is over they can then think of the landlord. This advice is being repeated now in much the same terms as ever. Dr. Tanner, M.P., speaking at Millstreet, county Cork, on the 15th of August, put it thus :—

Arm yourselves for the fray, keep your pockets tightly buttoned up. You will be obliged to pay your shopkeepers ; do so in order to clothe and feed your wives and families. If, of course, when you have done all this, and have and hold sufficient to stock your farms next year, why, if you have then any margin of course give it as rent ; but if not, as I should imagine would be the case, why no one can give what he has not got.

And Mr. Gilhooly, M.P., tendered the same advice to his friends at Bantry on the same date :—

Your first duties are to look to your families and to their requirements. If you have money spared after attending to them, pay it to the landlords. If none is spared they are entitled to none, and you are justified in combining to protect your property, should the landlord try to deprive you of it. . . . By combination, unity, and courage, the tenant-farmers will be able to keep themselves and their families in their homes during the coming winter. They have a right to live and thrive on the soil of this country, and if they allow themselves to be driven from their homes for want of unity, courage, and combination, they will not receive, nor do they deserve, the sympathy, respect, or support of their friends in America to better their condition.

(Both speeches are reported in the *Cork Examiner* of Tuesday, August 17th.) Many of the tenants have also of late years neglected their farms, their minds have been unsettled by the constant agitation and the prospect of getting their land for nothing; and if an Irishman thinks he can get on without working he will certainly prefer to do so. People complain, too, that the labourers have become demoralized and idle, and that there is no getting a good day's work out of them now.

I have met with some remarkable instances of what may be done by industry as compared with idleness. One was that of a widow living on a wild mountain holding, the rent of which is £2 10s. Her husband died only three years ago, and during the last forty years they have made enough to give three daughters substantial fortunes and to send a

son to America. They had no other means of making money but the land, and it was simply the result of patient toil. "We did make money thin, sir," said the woman, "and people can do it by industry." In another case a man took a farm near Macroom, in 1845, of considerably over 100 acres, on a thirty-one years' lease, and at a rent of £113. He started with four cows, a horse, and £200 which he got with his wife. He prospered, and, in spite of the famine times, took another farm under the same landlord in 1849, at £64, and yet another in the following year at £76. He gave one daughter a fortune of £800, a second £600, and a third £400. He built houses on two of the farms and gave them up, fully stocked, to two of his sons. At his death he left the third farm to another son, and £300 to a fourth, who took a farm also under the same landlord. Those four sons are now hopelessly insolvent; they have given themselves up to idleness and drinking, and one of them, I am told, entertained the Land League with champagne. The landlord has endeavoured to help them by giving enormous reductions, but they seem unable to do anything.

Some landlords would do well to remember that too much indulgence is as bad as none at all, and that there are other ways of helping tenants besides merely giving abatements of rent. The rent is

after all nothing as compared with the produce of the land, and the real thing is to teach them to improve, though with Irish farmers it has to be done almost in spite of themselves. It is demoralizing that they should come to look upon abatements of rent as the only remedy for bad times, and that they should not rouse themselves to better methods of farming, and do something to help themselves.

## LETTER IV.

KERRY, *August 30.*

AT the close of my last letter I alluded to the importance of trying to get Irish tenants to improve their methods of farming, and the difficulty of persuading them to change what they have been always used to. The agent of a very large property in the south-west endeavoured to improve the breed of pigs and cattle on the estate this year by procuring a number of good beasts and offering them as presents among the more prosperous farmers. The first man to whom he sent a boar refused it, the only reason he could give being that his wife would not let him have it; and no one else would take it after it had been once rejected. Another man who had received a present of a fine bull came soon after with a petition that he might be allowed to fatten it for sale. It was pointed out to him that his cattle might be worth £2 or £3 a-head more if they were better bred, but he thought "maybe they'd be too good, and mightn't do on the mountain." There is hardly

any sale now for inferior cattle, the natural consequence when there is a shrinkage being that only the better qualities are in demand, and yet they will not see the necessity of improving their breeds.

In some cases, however, they are being starved into improvements. The low price they have been getting for their butter has driven them to recognize the fact that it is not as good as it might be, and that they must mend their method of making it; and it is a hopeful sign that the Dairy School, which has been lately established at Cork in connection with the Model Farm there, is being largely patronized by the farmers' daughters. They go through a two months' course, paying a fee of £2, which does not cover the cost of their board, and are taught butter-making, not only with the newest and most approved appliances, but also with the ordinary ones which they are likely to use at their own homes. They can, moreover, get instruction in cookery and the economical management of food, accomplishments in which most Irishwomen are sadly deficient. There were other model farms in Ireland besides those now carried on at Cork and Glasnevin under the control of the Education Commissioners, but the farmers did not appreciate them, and but for the Dairy School the institution at Cork might also have been given up. They can take in thirty girls at a

time, and the school has not only been quite full all this year, but several applications have had to be refused for want of room.

At Bantry I visited a most prosperous butter factory, which was started about five years ago, and is rapidly developing a very successful business. Irish butter has for a long time had a bad name, chiefly owing to the carelessness and want of method with which it is made. They salt one churning and put it into the firkin and wait for the next, and so on, keeping it meantime perhaps in a place which is neither clean nor well ventilated, the result being that the firkin when complete is composed of butter of different qualities, unevenly salted, and possibly tainted into the bargain. I have heard of one old woman who said she liked to set the milk in her room, because she could skim it from her bed in the morning. The manager of the butter factory buys up the butter from the people just as it is made; the different qualities are then carefully separated, and a batch of one kind is put through four different machines, worked by an engine—two for washing, one for pressing out the water, and one for salting the butter. It is then packed into clean firkins lined with muslin and despatched to London, where the best brand is now well known and commands the highest price. They turn out nearly £2,000



worth of butter a week during the summer and a considerable quantity in the winter, while between the cooperage and dairy work there are nearly 100 hands employed. I saw 180 firkins of the butter which had been bought only the day before ready to be despatched by the next train. Creameries have also been established in various places, in some of which the milk is simply put through the separator, while in others the people bring their cream, which is churned in the ordinary way. One gentleman in county Cork, who carries on dairy farming on the most approved principles, tells me that he gets £1 more per cwt. for his butter than most of the farmers, and seeing that there must be over 200,000 cwt. produced in this county in the year, it affords a slight indication of the increase of wealth rendered possible in the country by the adoption of improvements. In the same way Ireland ought to be able to supply the English market with eggs, but the people seem wanting in the energy and method requisite for developing such an industry. \*At Bantry I came across a striking instance of a most promising enterprise being nipped in the bud by the action of the League. A few years ago two local gentle-

\* The statements contained in this passage were contradicted by the Rev. M. Shinkwin, P.P., Bantry, in a letter to the *Times*.

men determined to try and open up the fishing in the bay. They laid out a certain amount of capital and employed a number of men, and at the end of the first month they had £300 worth of fish stored in the town. This was merely the beginning of what might have been developed to almost any extent, and given a large amount of employment among the people; but at the end of a month the promoters of the undertaking were boycotted. They could not sell the fish or procure cartage for sending it away, and it was finally put out on the fields for manure. There are thousands of pounds' worth of fish lying in Bantry Bay waiting to be caught, but with such an example before them no private individuals are likely to repeat so disastrous an experiment, and it is no wonder that those who have had such an experience should think the Irish a hopeless people, and consider it a thankless task to try and help people who will not help themselves.

From Cork to Bandon the railway passes through a fine, well-wooded country, with fertile fields and smiling crops. Just before reaching the station the Duke of Devonshire's Bandon estates are passed, and, just after, the beautiful grounds of Castle Bernard. Not far from Drimoleague may be seen the spot on the road where Mr. Hutchins was shot at five years ago, and his driver killed. Every

one in the district knew the murderer, but there was no one to give evidence against him. Bantry itself is well worth stopping at, though the ordinary tourist rushes on to more popular places. If he climbs the hill beyond the town, he will get a most lovely view of the bay looking inland ; and Bantry House, too, well repays a visit, with its wonderful collection of tapestries made by the second lord, including those from the Tuileries bearing the initials of Marie Antoinette. The beauties of Glengariff have often been described, and it is certainly one of the choicest spots on the face of the earth. The blue waters of the bay studded with islands ; the rich foliage coming down to the very edge of the sea ; and the wild mountains that surround it complete a picture which of its kind is unsurpassed. The drive on to Killarney is also magnificent. The road runs for a considerable distance up a splendid mountain pass, descending to Kenmare, where there is a very handsome chapel and convent, and lace-making is carried to great perfection under the superintendence of the nuns ; and the latter part of the drive down through the richest woods to the far-famed lakes is beautiful indeed.

This has been the worst tourist season for many years ; indeed, I anticipated as much from the difficulty I found in procuring a copy of Murray's

“Ireland” before leaving London, even Mr. Stanford being unable to produce one, not because the stock was exhausted, but because there is no demand for Irish guide books. The hotel keepers say that but for the Americans they might give up, and the people fully realize that the English are afraid to come, though they say, with perfect truth, that they would be as safe as in their native country. The tourist might travel through the south and west without seeing a trace of the evil that exists, unless he set himself to look for it, and it is difficult to believe that the lovely country that surrounds Killarney is the scene of almost nightly raids and outrages.

My first introduction to Kerry was somewhat in the nature of a surprise, as on visiting a well-known land agent I found his hall-door wide open, and that he thought nothing of sitting in his dining room on the ground floor with the lamp lit and windows open, although he has evicted rather more than two dozen tenants in the last three months. It is, however, a quiet part of the county, and one in which the League has never made much way. He told me the tenants are for the most part paying him, but he has to evict some of the defaulters, or the whole property would be demoralized. My experiences have not all been equally pleasant, as I

slept last night in a house guarded by police, and when my host drove me out in his carriage we were followed by an escort on an outside car—a specimen of civilization in the nineteenth century.

Kerry is certainly in a most extraordinary state. The whole county is in a condition of the most abject terrorism, and the people are domineered over by a handful of village tyrants in each particular place. There are various organizations at work, partly independent of one another, but so interwoven that it is impossible to distinguish between them. There is the National League with its various branches posing as a constitutional organization. There are the Moonlighters acting, it would seem, independently in each locality; and there is the Fenian organization, which is more or less merged in the others, and supplies materials ready to hand. The League, of course, disclaims all connection with outrages; but though it may not organize or direct them, it is impossible to acquit the local branches of all association with them.

Every Moonlighter is a member of the League, though it by no means follows that every member of the League is a Moonlighter. They are, for the most part, younger sons of small farmers, but directed by men in a better position of life; and as surely as the League denounces a man so surely do they carry

the decree into effect, and if a man is had up for outrage or intimidation the local secretary of the League will be seen in court instructing the solicitor for the defence. If an outrage is committed and the murderers are brought to justice, as in the Curtin case, those who secure the vindication of the law are boycotted by order of the League. If a priest denounces outrages at a meeting of the League he probably finds himself deserted by half the members of the League ; and those of the farming class who have suffered at the hands of Moonlighters, and with whom I have conversed, attribute all their misfortunes to the action of the League.

The Nationalist leaders repudiate the outrages, but without the outrages their organization would never have attained its present power or position. They say they have used their influence to check boycotting, but their agents in each particular place are the active promoters of boycotting. From a report of the proceedings of the Killarney Branch in the *Cork Examiner* of August 17, it appears that at a meeting presided over by Mr. Sheehan, M.P., a fund was started for John Roche, who had been imprisoned for "alleged intimidation," and that several contributed on the spot ; the fact being that Roche had been sent to gaol for a month, having pleaded "Guilty" before the magistrates.

The worst sign of all is the spirit of the people. I believe there is no doubt that the farmers in Kerry are for the most part heartily sick of the League and the Moonlighting, and the whole agitation, but the younger generation are hopelessly demoralized. They look upon the outrages as an act of war, and the Moonlighters in their eyes are heroes fighting in a noble cause. They have thrown off the restraint of religion and of the priests, and it is difficult to see how they are ever to become decent members of society. I have even heard of cases in which farmers are anxious to have their sons sent out of the country, and to get rid of them altogether. The priest of one parish gave me some remarkable figures to show the falling off of the people in attending to their religious duties. From 1873 to 1879 the number of communions in his parish averaged 39,000 per annum, with a population of about 10,000. In 1880, the year in which the Land League went ahead, the number fell to 26,000, without any decrease in the population. He also dwelt on the extent to which perjury had increased. In one case, at the Cork Assizes, no less than 19 witnesses attended to prove an *alibi*, and counsel was brought down specially from Dublin, when, to the consternation of his friends, the prisoner pleaded "Guilty." In fact, the people are altogether changed, the agitation

seems to have brought out all their bad qualities, their untruthfulness, their trickery and deceit, and to have effaced most of the good ones. A Roman Catholic gentleman also told me that infidelity has increased enormously, especially among the men. He said that on the 15th of this month, being Lady-day in harvest, one of the days when they are all expected to go to Mass, he counted about 100 women in his parish chapel, but not a single man except himself.



## LETTER V.

KERRY, *September 3.*

IT is a general subject of remark that the police in Kerry have not been more successful in bringing the Moonlighters to justice, and unfavourable conclusions are frequently drawn from their failure in that respect. No body of men can be perfect, and there may be cases, especially among those who have joined within the last two or three years, in which there has been sympathy or fraternizing with undesirable persons. There must be considerable temptation, especially in outlying districts, to stand well with the people and make things easy for themselves, while it is further said that partiality for the national beverage has increased to an undue extent among the police. The concessions to Mr. Parnell and the introduction of the Home Rule Bill must also in the nature of things have shaken the force considerably, though I am told the men were most indignant at the prospect of being handed over, and that a large majority were making arrangements to retire.

In criticizing the police it must not be forgotten that they have great difficulties to contend with. In the first place, they get no assistance from the people, not so much owing to sympathy with crime as from fear of the consequences. Full particulars of outrages, with the names of the perpetrators, are often given in the heat of the moment, but when it comes to identifying their assailants the people are afraid to look at them. They know, moreover, that even if they do give evidence the juries will not convict, while they will be marked men, perhaps for the rest of their lives, and not only be in danger of physical violence, but lose their way of living. If the Government had supported people like the Curtins, who not only fought the murderous gang, but brought some of them to justice, and had conspicuously rewarded them, it might have been an incentive to others to come forward ; but when they see the persecution to which such people are subjected as the result of their courageous conduct, they are not likely to render themselves liable to the same results. In one case a poor family, living in the Black Valley, near the Gap of Dunloe, not only repelled an attack of Moonlighters, but pursued the band and took one of them prisoner ; but the only recognition of their conduct at the hands of the Government was a present of firearms and police protection.

The police in Kerry have also been very much overworked, and the requests of the local authorities for reinforcements have hitherto not received much consideration. It might be thought that the various patrols must of necessity sometimes meet the Moonlighters, but the latter do not march out in a body. Having fixed a raid for a particular night, they start separately and meet at the house which is to be the object of attack. They also have a perfectly organized system of spies, who watch every movement of the police, and keep their friends duly informed. It must moreover be remembered that the constabulary are a military, and not a detective force, and are unable to deviate from hard and fast rules, or to act otherwise than in accordance with the strict orders they have received on each particular occasion. The force has not, therefore, the elasticity or adaptability necessary for coping with such an abnormal state of things as that existing at present. It is certain that a large number of outrages are never reported to the police at all. The farmers say it would be of no use—they would get no one to work for them, their hay would be burnt, and the Government cannot protect them. I have even met with cases in which gentlemen in the position of magistrates prefer to pass over such things in silence.

Most of the authorities and law-abiding persons in

Kerry seem agreed in thinking there can be no material change for the better without the suppression of the National League and the re-enactment in a perpetual form, applicable if possible to the entire kingdom, of the more useful provisions of the Crimes Act—such as those dealing with change of venue and special jurors, examination of witnesses when a crime has been committed, intimidation, taking forcible possession of houses from which a tenant has been evicted, charging extra police upon particular areas, and compensation for malicious injuries to person. At present there is compensation for malicious injuries to cattle and property, but if a man is shot in the legs and crippled for life, or if a woman sees her husband killed before her eyes, there is none; and it certainly acted as a considerable deterrent when that provision was in force. A land agent tells me that one day when he was going on a particular property to re-value it, he did not altogether like the demeanour of the tenants. Having lit his pipe, he sat down on a bank, and told them he had been talking the matter over with his wife, and, seeing they had a good many children, he thought there would not be less than £10,000 levied on the district as compensation if he were shot. After that he found them all extremely friendly. An increase of summary jurisdiction would also be very desirable.

At present, if the resident magistrates imprison for more than a month, an appeal lies. Meantime, the prisoner gets out, and the case is finally heard before the County Court Judge, who is in some cases remarkably weak.

It is very essential that the police should have power to attend every meeting of the League and report the proceedings. At present nothing is known but what appears in the papers, and a proper amount of caution is naturally exercised in the matter of publication. The local branches hold their courts regularly every Sunday; they summon people before them, and the more prominent members sit to adjudicate upon the cases. I have obtained some reliable details as to the action of one branch in this county two Sundays ago. F—, publican, was charged with supplying drink to an emergency man. His wife appeared to answer the charge. She pleaded "Guilty," gave an explanation, and promised not to offend again. She was then let off "with a caution as to her future conduct." One man was adjudged "wholly boycotted" for six months for demanding rent. Another, who had been boycotted for some time, put in an appearance for the purpose of getting leave to weed a field of turnips on his boycotted farm. "I saw they had so many cases before them," he said to my in-

formant, "that I came away, as I had no chance of getting a hearing to-day."

The House League also sat and adjudicated on several cases. In the case of F—, landlord, and C—, tenant, the rent was reduced from £6 to £3 10s., and others much in the same proportion. The leading members in each place are generally broken-down shopkeepers, who manage to live by the system and make it the vehicle for gratifying every petty spite and trade jealousy. Many of the farmers join simply for peace sake, and it is a common custom to raise the funds by expelling members on the flimsiest pretext, and making them pay double their original subscription as a fine on re-admission. The farmers are all assessed at so much on their valuation, and I am told by some whose avocations take them among the people that they would be only too glad to be relieved of the whole thing.

At one of the seaport towns in Kerry they have lately decided to boycott a steamer which brings goods from Cork, the result being that the people will have to pay far higher prices, but the carriers and local tradesmen will be the gainers. In another town a butcher hauled up some cattle dealers for buying from an emergency man, but, having thus depreciated the market, he was soon afterwards found to be buying in a like quarter himself on the quiet.

In one place a woman is boycotted for giving a few sods of turf to her daughter, who is also boycotted, to cook food for her children. In another a station-master is boycotted, and the people walk and send their goods to the adjoining stations, which relieves the obnoxious person of a good deal of work, but injures no one but themselves. I saw one man in an out-of-the-way part of Kerry who has been boycotted for the last sixteen months, because he is looked on as "a landlord's man." The League did not become strong in his locality before, but during that time he says he has lost at least £300. He cannot get people to work for him or look after his sheep, and no servant dare work in his house. He has to get in food by stealth at night, and pay heavily those who venture to help him. He got some things from Cork, and they tried to boycott the firm that supplied him. He holds an island adjoining the coast, but this year the neighbouring islanders, who have paid neither rent nor taxes for some time past, have put their cattle on it, and told the landlord they will pay rent for it "if they can." "It's a most diabolical persecution, sir," he said, "and I wonder the Government allow such things. The League have everything their own way, and there's no law but theirs." I saw another farmer who is boycotted, the only reason he could give being that he had bought his

holding from the landlord; but I fancy he, too, is looked on generally as "a landlord's man." Another man in the locality is boycotted because he voted for him as a Poor Law guardian, and four others for speaking to him.

From Killarney I made an expedition to Millstreet and visited Mr. Hegarty, who has been standing out for six years against the most aggravated system of boycotting. He had been for a considerable time a large trader in Millstreet, and was very popular and widely respected. He steadily refused, however, to have anything to do with the Land League, and this was made the pretext for trying to ruin him by those who were jealous of his position and prosperity. At the close of the year 1880 he was boycotted by a resolution of the League. Notices were posted throughout the district warning the people to have nothing to do with him, and men were told off to prevent any one from entering his doors. For some months his friends refused to desert him, but, the houses of several customers having been visited by Moonlighters, they were obliged to give in, and his business has been completely ruined. He has suffered every form of persecution, and was fired at last year on the public road; but he has held his ground and refused to capitulate. Shortly before the decree of boycotting



one of his daughters died, and no one in the land, I was told, could have had a greater funeral ; but if he had died himself three months afterwards there would not have been fifty people to follow his remains to the grave. Another daughter died only a short time ago, and orders were sent round the town that no one should put up their shutters for the funeral. The procession was closely watched, and those who ventured to attend were had up the following Sunday before the League and forced to apologize. He is as honest, respectable, and industrious a man as any one could wish to see, and his only offence consists in his refusal to join a movement to which he could not reconcile his conscience, coupled with the fact that he was too hardworking and prosperous. The victims in all the cases I have mentioned have been members of the Roman Catholic Church.

I had a conversation yesterday with a Nationalist, who was extremely honest and outspoken, and was evidently endowed with a fair share of brains. He said the country would never be right till she had her Home Rule Parliament. Manufactures would then be fostered, and they would boycott English goods if she "behaved badly" to them, though it did not seem to strike him that they would be punishing themselves more than England. They would also put all the railways in the country under

the control of one Board, and save a great deal of expense. There was plenty of capital, he thought, in Ireland, but after a year the country would be in such a prosperous state that English capital would flow in freely. If Mr. Parnell sent down his valet he would vote for him, for no man had done so much for the Irish people. The landlords had brought all their troubles on themselves by rack-renting and oppressing the people, and the only remedy was to make the tenants owners of the land they tilled ; but he admitted that farming could not be successfully carried on without capital, and that the insolvent tenants would have to go. As to the outrages, he thought some of them had gone too far, but they were necessary, because England would never listen to peaceable demands, and he allowed that without the outrages the League would never have attained its power. I asked him whether every Moonlighter was not a member of the League, and whether they did not simply execute its decrees. " We don't admit that," he replied, but with a twinkle in his eye which meant that I was right.

I visited the Curtins and heard their sad story from their own lips. Mr. Curtin was always a most peaceable man, liked by every one, and ready to do a good turn for any of his neighbours. Casey, one of the men who were convicted, used often to

come from his father to ask for a loan of money, which he invariably got, and Curtin, I was told by a Nationalist, used to send his horses to plough for Mrs. Sullivan, whose son was shot in the struggle. He subscribed to the League for peace sake at his wife's instigation, but never attended their meetings, and paid his rent, and he always said that if he were visited by the Moonlighters he would resist. Coming as they did at half-past seven in the evening, they expected to catch the whole family in the parlour at tea, but the two sons were in the back kitchen when they came in, and Curtin was thus enabled to rush upstairs for his arms. He would have escaped altogether had he not gone to the door when the vanquished party were retiring and called out, "Go home now, boys," when one of them turned round and shot him. The Nationalists say the whole affair was a mistake, and that the visit was made with the object of shooting another man who had been at the house during the day ; but the sympathy of the people was clearly with the murderers. Mr. Curtin's funeral was only attended by persons whose position rendered them independent of the League, whereas that of Sullivan, the Moonlighter, was made the object of a great popular demonstration, the people attending in hundreds, with bands playing and colours flying,

to do honour to the man who had "died for his country."

The persecution of the Curtin family still continues. A police hut has been erected close to their house, and they cannot go out without protection, and are insulted and hooted by the people. They cannot show themselves in their chapel, but have to hear the mass from the sacristy, and no one knows the life they lead. There was a meeting of the National League at Firies on the Saturday previous to the murder, which they attribute to the violent speeches made there. The speakers at these meetings seem to think they can rouse the passions of the people and stop there, but the deeds of violence that follow are only the natural consequence. When Davitt came down to denounce the outrages, his visit to Mrs. Sullivan was interpreted as one of sympathy, while he passed the Curtins by, and the people took the denunciation as a piece of show.

## LETTER VI.

KERRY, *September 9.*

THE town of Killarney presents a most dilapidated appearance, and does little credit to its Commissioners ; in fact, it has been said by a local celebrity that the houses would have fallen long ago but for the number of corner boys who spend their time leaning against them. I saw some Moonlighters who had just been discharged walking triumphantly through the town, their victim having, as usual, been afraid to identify them when it came to the point. They were quite young fellows, one a regular boy. Speculation is rife as to the course which Sir Redvers Buller intends to adopt, and the prevailing opinion is, that if he has brought enough money he may succeed in checking the outrages. There is good reason for believing that many of the Moonlighters would be only too glad to get out of the whole business. They join these secret societies very often against their will, and are kept in them and obliged to execute their decrees through fear of

being shot themselves. With the fate of Carey before them there is no prospect of getting evidence which will necessitate their going on to "the table" (which in Ireland usually represents the witness-box), but information might be obtained beforehand which would lead to the capture of the offenders in the act. I visited the neighbourhood of Castleisland, which has during the last few years attained the unenviable notoriety of being considered about the worst spot in the country. The evil repute into which the place has fallen may perhaps be partly attributed to the fact that Brady and Curley, who were executed for the Phoenix Park murders, were employed not long before at the rebuilding of a house in the district, and may be supposed to have propagated their doctrines among their fellow-workmen. It was also almost immediately after a visit from Mr. P. J. Sheridan, in the disguise of a priest, that the outrages began. There are four roads going out of Castleisland, on every one of which a man has been shot within the last four years.

Tralee is a better town than Killarney, and boasts of one highly respectable street, but the back parts are dirty and badly kept. The expedition to the Promontory of Dingle, though rather out of the ordinary tourist track, is well worth making. The drive is a fine one; the road running at first along

Tralee Bay, and then crossing through a wild mountain district to Dingle Bay, on the other side of the promontory. Dingle itself is prettily situated at the head of a wonderfully land-locked harbour, and behind it rises Brandon Mountain, one of the highest in Ireland. The League has lately become very strong in this locality, and boycotting has gone to great lengths. The gunboat lying in the harbour was apparently intended to overawe the people, but its presence has not produced the desired effect. Off the promontory lie the Blasket Islands, and outside them the Foze Rock, which is the most westerly point of Ireland. The climate of Dingle is very mild, fuchsia hedges are quite common, and at Burnham, Lord Ventry's place, hydrangeas grow out all the year round, and New Zealand flax may be seen growing luxuriantly. A few miles north of Tralee lies Ardfert, which the antiquary will visit for the sake of its early English cathedral and Franciscan abbey, while the agriculturist will find sufficient interest in Mr. Talbot Crosbie's well-known herd of shorthorns. He is a landlord who has devoted himself to his property, enlarging the holdings and doing everything for his tenants, and the village is rapidly becoming a model one, as the old cabins are replaced by well-built concrete houses. From the year

1839 to the passing of the Land Act of 1881 some £40,000 was expended by the landlord in improvements, but when the control of the property was taken out of his hands by the Act he naturally stopped the expenditure, and in only one case has there been any improvement on the part of the tenants since that date. So far from being an impetus to improvement, the effect of that legislation has rather been to make them rather let their land run out, for, being valued as it stands, they get the rent proportionately reduced, and, in case of a sale, they expect to get it at a lower rate.

Ardfert has till lately been a very quiet place, but a storm arose a few months ago from the building of labourers' cottages upon a common by the Tralee Board of Guardians without compensation to the commoners, who proceeded to root up the foundations. The facts having been laid before the Local Government Board, they advised the Board of Guardians to give up this part of their scheme, which they refused to do, and two factions have, in consequence, been created in Ardfert, the "croo-beens," or "pig's feet," representing the commoners, and the "Doolings," so named from the leader of the opposing party, and every opportunity is taken for a fight. The house of the Protestant clergyman at Ardfert was fired into two or three



weeks ago, the only assignable reason being that he signed a petition against Home Rule ; and while I was there a labourer was murdered in cold blood a few miles off because he had undertaken to save the meadow on a farm which had been seized for debt by two shopkeepers in Tralee. In the graveyard of the cathedral is a tomb bearing the inscription “May they rest in pace !” which may be a combination of English and Latin, or Irish.

Ballybunion is a very pretty watering-place at the mouth of the Shannon, and near it I visited a model farm on the property of Mr. George Hewson, who has laid out a large sum in consolidating and improving the holdings on his property. I saw one field which had formerly been divided into no less than fourteen, with a river running through the middle, squared up and drained, and growing splendid crops of turnip, mangold, and potatoes. The houses and offices are such as might be seen on the best-managed English property ; and the tenants have every opportunity of living and thriving.

The district of North Kerry of which Listowel is the centre has lately acquired a reputation for extreme lawlessness, and the sub-sheriff finds it impossible to execute the Queen’s writ. When he arrives with his bailiffs and police he is met by the

blowing of horns, which is taken up at short intervals all through the country, and the cattle are driven off the farms before he can attempt to effect a seizure. The people in some places are repudiating all their obligations, whether rent, shop debts, or taxes, and they are baffling the sheriff's attempts to obtain satisfaction in the manner above described. The League also exercises its sway in the most relentless manner. About two years ago Lord Listowel spent a considerable sum in opening up certain bogs on his property for the purpose of letting turbary to the public in the district. A nominal sum had been paid for the grazing of these bogs by some of the tenants, who resented the change, and those who ventured to take the turbary had their turf cut up at night and put back into the trench. In the present year a man named Conway had the temerity to take and cut a turf bank, which was destroyed in the same way, and a charge was made against him at the Odorney branch of the National League, with the result that he was expelled from membership, and the following night his house was visited by Moonlighters, and he was shot in the legs. In another case, on the same property, a widow continued to hold a bog, which had been formerly let to her husband, till the close of the season 1885, when she surrendered it, stating that she did not require it

any longer. It was let this year on the same terms to another tenant, who was had up before the League, and though he attempted to justify his conduct they refused to accept any explanation or to grant him pardon unless he surrendered the bog, which he was obliged to do.

Why Kerry, which was formerly one of the quietest parts of Ireland, should have undergone such a change it is not easy to say. Landlord oppression and evictions we are told by the Nationalists, but it is difficult to find any trace of such oppression as would account for the present state of things, while the cases of eviction in which the tenant has not been put back as caretaker have been few. It may safely be said that in many cases the League itself is the cause of evictions, as there are numberless tenants who have allowed themselves to be turned out rather than offend against the unwritten law, when they had the money in their pockets and were anxious to pay. There have doubtless been cases of hardship. Advantage has sometimes been taken of change of tenancies to raise the rent on each successive change without any other pretext whatever, and in some cases rents have been raised solely on the tenants' improvements. Many of those who purchased under the Encumbered Estates Act were men who had made money in

business, and looked on their property simply as a machine for turning out interest; and some landlords and agents, without being actually hard, have not been judicious, either in their method of dealing with the tenants or their manner towards them. As to absenteeism, it is notorious that the estates of the great absentee proprietors are among the best and most liberally managed in Ireland. Still the fact remains that a large sum of money is taken yearly out of the country, and the loss of the civilizing influence and personal interest in his property of a resident proprietor is incalculable. Many of the tenants have never even seen their landlords, and though that may be a matter of sentiment, sentiment goes a long way with an Irishman. But when all has been said, it is very questionable whether some of the landlords in Kerry have not erred more on the side of over-indulgence. Some of them allowed their rents to accumulate for years, and the tenants to do what they liked, with the result that the latter became altogether demoralized, and when any change was made in the management they resented it bitterly. I have even met with cases in which nine and ten years' rent is due, and that on property which is most moderately let. In fact, it is a matter of common observation that where the tenants have the cheapest farms they are the worst off, as they

have no incentive to work. In one case on the Wallace property near Mill Street, the rent was half-a-crown an acre, and the tenants were in a wretched state, but when it was raised by the Court to ten shillings they began at once to improve; and some of Mr. Stafford O'Brien's tenants in Clare, whose rents only amount to about half the valuation, are far poorer than their neighbours who pay a substantial rent for precisely the same quality of land.

The real cause of the state of Kerry must be sought rather in the spirit which has been raised by the agitation of the last six years and in the communistic doctrines which have been instilled into the people. It is a spirit of pure lawlessness and of resistance to all obligations, whether of honesty or morality, and it has been fostered and encouraged by the violent speeches which have been delivered from many platforms, with the result that the pupils have bettered the instruction. It is difficult, moreover, to estimate the mischief which has been done throughout the country by the teaching of such papers as *United Ireland*, which minister to the worst passions of the people, and it is hard to blame an ignorant and excitable populace while their minds are being constantly poisoned by such pestilent stuff.

As to the present ability of the tenants to pay their rents, no doubt they have suffered severely, especially those who depend chiefly on dairy farming, but most of them could probably put together half-a-year's rent if they tried. Their advocates allege that landlords and statesmen are not making sufficient allowance for the depression, but they must admit that the tenants themselves are to blame, for there have been so many protestations of inability to pay which have proved unfounded that they are now received at least with suspicion. A tenant on Lord Ormathwaite's property, I am told, took a farm in 1862 at £250, having little or no capital. He subsequently purchased the interest of two or three tenants on another estate and a number of houses in Listowel worth about £2,000, and is reported to have a large sum besides. His rent was reduced to £232 by the Land Commissioners, and he refused to pay until his house property was put up for sale, when he paid the rent and costs. A woman on another property in Kerry, whose rent was £18, was not allowed to pay even with a reduction; proceedings were taken against her, and she had to pay the full rent and £16 costs, which she did, with many maledictions on the League and the priests who had prevented her from settling amicably with her landlord.

The effect of the Arrears Act was also very demoralizing. A man, for example, who owed three years' rent paid one and got off the other two, being thus placed in the same position as his more thrifty neighbours who had paid everything that was due. The latter now say they will take care not to be caught again, and many of those who were relieved of their arrears have paid nothing since, and say, by way of excuse, "Shure, there'll soon be another Arrears Act." It also enabled many who were hopelessly insolvent to prolong their lease of life, and has in reality benefitted neither them nor the landlord. The Land Act provides a method of getting rid of insolvent tenants by giving them the right of selling their interest; but the League will not allow it to work; in fact, they sit on the safety valve, and then complain of the machinery. Nevertheless, there have been cases, even in Kerry, within the last few months, in which as much as eighteen and nineteen years' purchase has been given for the tenant-right—more, in fact, than they are willing to give the landlord for his fee simple. These sales must have been privately effected, for no one is allowed to buy the interest in a farm at a public auction. Nearly all the landlords and agents I have met in Kerry look to peasant proprietorship as the only solution of the

land question. The relations between landlord and tenant have become so strained, that it seems almost hopeless to think they will ever settle down again, and the tenants are in many cases anxious to buy if they were allowed. In one case a landlord lately offered to sell to a tenant whose rent is £9 4s. for £125 and to forgive him the year's rent due, the result of which would have been an immediate reduction of his rent to £5 a year, but he preferred to pay the £9 4s. and costs. In another case the judicial rent was £18 10s., and the landlord offered to sell for £325, which would have reduced the rent to £13, but the man said his priest would not allow him to buy. I have, on the other hand, met one or two landlords who are unwilling to sell, and who are persuaded that land will go up again, and that if only law and order were restored the tenants would resume their former ways.

The large farmers are, I believe, generally worse off than the small ones. They began to live very extravagantly in the good years, giving large fortunes to their daughters, getting unlimited credit at the shops, and borrowing without difficulty from the banks, with the natural consequence that they now find themselves in many cases terribly involved. The smaller tenants, on the other hand, who have not had the same opportunities for extravagance,



and can work their farms, as a rule, without employing labour, have not suffered so much and are paying better. Though the times are bad, it is by no means impossible to farm without a profit. A gentleman who is both a landlord and tenant tells me that his farm is paying its way, and a large farmer says that after paying his rent and discharging all other obligations he had a small balance last year; but the fact is that the tenants generally have been neglecting their work and attending meetings and reading the papers, and expecting to get the land for nothing. The younger generation have become regular idlers, and are not satisfied with the style of living their fathers have been used to. They have discarded the good old frieze and corduroy for cloth and tweed, which are more expensive and less serviceable, and it is not uncommon to see a farmer's daughter with a gale's rent on her back.

I have seen no trace of poverty in Kerry. Even at such an out-of-the-way place as Dingle, on the monthly fair day, I could not avoid being struck with the remarkably well-to-do appearance of the people. The men were all dressed in blue cloth coats and tweed trousers, and it was only here and there that an old man was to be seen in the picturesque dress of former days. The children, too,

seem everywhere well-dressed and fed ; but though I failed to find it, it would of course be too much to allege that poverty does not exist. One thing is perfectly clear—that the people generally care nothing for Home Rule. Many of them hardly know what it means, and farmers of a better class are afraid of the taxes they would have to pay. I met a decent old fellow, whilst taking a ramble through the mountains, and had a talk with him on things in general. He complained of the bad times and the prices of butter and cattle, and I asked him whether he thought things would be better under Home Rule. “I think a Land Bill would be the best,” he said, “I do not think Home Rule is much good ;” and by a Land Bill he meant land purchase. Another man whom I met in the same locality made a suggestion which should commend itself to wiser heads than his. “Whatever Act the Government pass,” he said, “they should insist, insist,” he repeated emphatically, “on its being observed for a certain term of years. It would be a first-class plan, sir, a first-class plan.”

## LETTER VII.

LIMERICK, *September 14.*

I HAVE before me some letters relating to the case of Tangney, Mr. Going's bog and wood ranger, who was murdered near Killarney last June, and, as they tell a story which is typical of many others, I give some extracts from them. The first letter is dated Sept. 26, 1885, and describes a visit from the Moonlighters :—

Honrd. Sir,—At 11 o'clock last night a band of armed men violently broke in my door, roaring and bawling like madmen, with the feum of drink from them; they dragged me out of bed, put me on my knees, with two loaded guns pointed at me, asking me would I give up everything, and not to be putting them to the trouble of coming again. . . . I had to promise them that I'd give up, and all in my house said the same. They would not allow me say a second word, but fired a shot quite close to me that frightened me and my family out of our senses, and discharged the rest of their guns out the windows. The fright of it to myself and my family I cannot explain; to be under the mercy of drunken men like mad dogs.

It would be more comfort to be to begging than the life I have this time past, publicly calling me a boycotted land-

grabber—even last Sunday they boode me through the town. . . . I have no ease got since — had the League; but I didn't like to be annoying you with it till I had to give it up. . . . I suppose you may as well send me a certificate that I have no claim to the woods that I can show the League. I don't know will they allow me look after the bogs or not. I must be satisfied whatever way they like to treat me; but I'll leave it all to God.

I am, Sir, your obedt. servant,

PAT. TANGNEY.

The next letter is dated June 1st, 1886, and is the last he ever wrote :—

Honrd. Sir,—Saturday I got your letter, as I ordered — not to give my letters to anyone but myself. Notices were posted along the road into Killarney, with the drawing of a coffin and gun, threatening any one that would cut the bogs of Artigallivan. My exertions I can't detail here. . . . C—, from —, brought a party of the tenants and opened a new bog, where I'm cutting turf in —'s place, by force. I resisted it with my son-in-law, and warned them, in the name of Messrs. Going, that law proceedings would be taken against them. . . . So I could not explain to your Honour the troubl of mind I have got from my neighbours. . . . In a word, I could not tell you my hardship in Killarney. I have finished this letter.

I am, honrd. Sir, your obedt. servant,

PAT. TANGNEY.

Two nights after he was visited a second time by the Moonlighters and murdered in the manner described by his daughter in the following letter, dated June 10, 1886 :—

Honrd. Sir,—I don't know how to tell you the cruel murder of my poor decent Father. . . . When those wretches came in they asked for him; he got out of bed and said "Men, what have I done." One said, "Come on your knees; did you not bring us this way before?" "Yes," said my poor Father, "and didn't I keep my word with ye." "Are not you doing the landlord's business; and letting bogs this week?" My poor father said that he did not let bogs, and I declared the same, and my poor mother. The moonlight said, "God knows that's not what we were told." . . . One of them asked him outside the door, that he wanted a word with him; my mother and I bawled out that he would not. She ran between my poor Father and the moonlights; one of them put the gun to her breast; she said "Let me go for the holy water." At the same time another moonlight had a gun pointed towards me, and told me get into the room. He said, "Go once, go twice, go the third time;" then I ran and he fired the shot. I can't tell you any more, but he died in my arms.

I may also give the following letter from the widow of a man who was murdered about six weeks ago, because it was suspected that he was going to pay his rent :—

"Honrd. Sir,—This sorreful letter contains a sad tragedy concerning my murdered husband, who was way laid and killed by — son of — heare in broad daylight not much more than one quarter of a mile from his sorreful home on Tuesday last I am sertin you have a full account of it from the publick papers the caus of his murder is this he had promised your Honer to pay rent in July there was a few pounds he had lent his brother previous to this and in order to keep his word with you he went to his brother's house for this money which he did receive and was found in his pocket after

being murdered these words you will find to be correct from the newspapers after the inquest which will take place on next week. Now it is what I want from your Honor's kind consideration take in to account the affliction God has showered upon me and I will ask you for a little further indulgence as the most of the money the he had for the rent went to pay his funeral expence I do expect to be able to pay after a little time as there is nothing from this forward so much before me as to have my rent paid.

I do not think I fully realized what boycotting meant till I met a large farmer at Newcastle Junction, in county Limerick, and asked him whether I could get a paper there. "You may get one down the platform," was the answer, "but they wouldn't sell me one." When it comes to being unable to buy a penny paper, the system is perfect indeed. He was going into Limerick to buy supplies for the week, being unable to get anything nearer, and was taking in part of a hay-rake to be repaired, which any blacksmith could have done in half-an-hour. His butter merchant in Cork wrote to say that if he continued to do business for him all his other customers would leave, and he has to sell his butter by strategy. He has a protection post in his yard, and his daughter cannot go out without a revolver and an escort of police. His hay was maliciously burnt, and they endeavoured to prove that she had set fire to it. If he had not happened to be away from home himself at the time it was burnt, all the water in the

Shannon, he said, would not have cleared him of it. His offence was the usual one—viz., taking a farm from which another had been evicted.

In the same district lives a farmer called Teskey, who was visited at night and beaten so severely that his life was for some time hanging in the scale. He and his wife both positively swore to one of the party being a man who had always worked for them and who lived within a quarter of a mile of their house, but he was acquitted by the jury, and a crowd of about a hundred people assembled at the station to cheer him on his return.

Limerick itself is, I fear, rather going down. It is too far from the sea, and is cut out by such ports as Cork and Waterford, but it can still boast a considerable trade. Some of the back parts of the city are very miserable, and the Garryowen quarter does not strike one as calculated to inspire the composer. Thomond Bridge is protected by the great massive towers of King John's Castle, and at the other end, mounted on a pedestal, stands the famous treaty stone. In the town-hall may be seen a curious old copper slab, fastened in the middle to a stone base by a large nail. It formerly stood in the market, and when a bargain was made the money was paid down on the nail—an example which the Irishman of to-day might do well to imitate.

It is a miserable spectacle at Murroe to see the Land League huts in which Lord Cloncurry's evicted tenants are housed, while their farms are worked by the Land Corporation, and their former dwellings falling into decay. They were substantial well-to-do tenants, but they refused to pay without a reduction, which was demanded in a manner that put the landlord's back up, and their farms were sold and bought by him. Some of them actually attended the sale with the money in their pockets, intending to buy, but were afraid to bid. They do not blame the landlord so much as those who advised them, and they are living in hopes of "a settlement." The case was made a test one by the League, which has supported the tenants ever since, and some of them say they are better off than before, but most of them are looking regretfully at their old farms and longing to be back. This was the scene of the famous battle of Murroe, which took place in the Fenian time of twenty years ago, when the people assembled in such numbers that the authorities sent down a force of horse, foot, and artillery; but the excitement was, after all, only caused by the election of a dispensary doctor, there being two candidates for the post, each of whom had a large following among the people. Close by is Glenstal Castle, Sir Croker Barrington's beautiful place, the owner



of which exercises a beneficent influence as a resident landlord and large employer, and appears deservedly popular. Even he has had to issue a few writs for the recovery of his rents, which appears to have been made the subject of a remarkable sermon, preached in the chapel by one of the Roman Catholic curates, who threatened (as reported in the *Cork Herald* of August 31) to bring 10,000 men to Murroe if necessary, in which event, I should imagine, the battle would prove as great a *fiasco* as the last. Some of his congregation, with whom I happened to converse, did not seem to be at all impressed by the discourse.

There is no doubt that many tenants, who are both able and anxious to pay their rents, are intimidated from doing so. The following copy of a printed handbill represents the first stage in the transaction:—

Notice.—To the tenants on D. G. Westropp's estate, to pay no rent unless they get 25 per cent. reduction.

All the tenants are requested to meet at Castleconnell on Sunday, 17th. after last mass, to appoint the day and hour to meet agent, Mr. Brown.

The person who may break these rules or go backsliding will be dealt with in no friendly way.

When the tenants have received such a notice they are bound to attend, and woe betide the man who makes a settlement for himself on terms other

than those which he is ordered to demand. In one case in this county a man paid his rent at the usual time, but asked the agent to keep the receipt, for if they suspected he had paid and searched his house, it would not do, he said, if the receipt were found. Two or three months after, when the tenants came in a body to pay, he appeared also and paid his rent a second time, getting it back afterwards from the agent, rather than let it be discovered that he had settled before the rest. In another case the landlord of a property which I visited was greatly astonished one morning to receive a round robin, signed in the names of his tenants, professing their utter inability to pay the half-year's rent which he had already received. He immediately went off to the place and asked them what they meant. After a good deal of fencing they told him they had been ordered to wait after mass the previous Sunday, and obliged to consent to the petition being signed for them, though they had actually paid the rent at the time. Many of the farmers admit that they can and wish to pay, but say they are afraid to do so. Others, of course, are glad to avail themselves of the excuse. All their dealings have to be accounted for to the League, and when they get an abatement, part of it, I am told, has to be handed over to the local treasurer of that organization.

Landlords are thinking twice before proceeding to evict, and do not take that step unless they are absolutely driven to it, as the consequences are by no means favourable to them. Either the land lies derelict, and is trespassed upon from all sides, or it must be worked by emergency men, with police protection, at great expense. I came across one case in this county of a good farm moderately let at £70 a year. Four years' rent are now due, and the tenant borrowed £200 some time ago from the agent to buy stock, and various other sums from his friends. He was offered £500 for his interest, but says he would not take £1,500, and the landlord hesitates to evict him in view of the difficulties that would ensue. If he were turned out it would, no doubt, be held up as a case of the grossest tyranny and hardship, though it is no advantage either to themselves or any one else that such people should be rooted to the soil. There are plenty of solvent men ready to take the farms, but even when a tenant is anxious to sell his interest and go he is not allowed to do so. A farm was advertised for sale a short time ago in this county, the rent of which was £56. The tenant told the agent he was certain of effecting a sale, as he had been offered £800, and another man was ready to give £1,000, but when it was put up to auction a relative of the tenant, who seemed to think he

had some interest in the farm, got up and said he hoped no one would bid for it, which proved sufficient to put a complete stop to the proceedings.

It was near Limerick that the remarkable attempt to boycott a sale of meadow directed by the Court on a property which is under a receiver was recently made. Mr. Ryan, the local secretary of the League, wrote to the auctioneer, enclosing the resolution by which it was agreed that the meadow should be boycotted, and no one ventured to bid. A local auctioneer, who was supposed to stand well with the League, was then got to advertise it, but in consequence of a meeting which was held the following Sunday he pulled down his bills with his own hands the same evening. Ryan was then imprisoned for contempt of court, his defence being that he acted not on his own responsibility, but "ministerially" as the officer of the League. Some local labourers were then got to save the meadow. They were had up before the League, but, getting no satisfactory answer to their demand for other work, they left in a body, saying they would save the hay, which they have been doing in spite of all opposition. The election of vice-chairman of the Limerick Rural Sanitary Board took place the other day, and the members of the board, considering they ought to pay a compliment to Mr. Ryan, who was in gaol, elected

him to fill the post. To offend against the law seems to be a decided recommendation, for I am told that at a recent election of a relieving officer for the Tulla Union all the applicants retired in favour of one who dated his application from the dock, where he was being tried on a charge of treason-felony, and he was at once elected.

Limerick has not attained the same notoriety for outrages as the adjoining counties of Kerry and Clare, but parts of it are bad enough and Moonlighting is not unknown. I saw four young fellows brought up before the magistrates on a charge of attacking a farmer's house at night. Three of them were mere boys, and the fourth was rather a determined-looking fellow of about three-and-twenty, who would probably have been the sergeant of the party. The house in question was attacked between 1 and 2 o'clock, and the farmer and his son sallied out, whereupon the attacking party took to flight. The son pursued them along a road which runs in a circle, while the father rode round the other way to the police barrack, where the head-constable mounted the horse, went on, and met these four men, whom he arrested, one of them resisting. The son had previously given up the pursuit, or he would have driven his men into the constable's arms, but as it was these four were found several miles from their homes at half-past

two in the morning, going away from home, and could give no reasonable account of themselves, but neither father nor son could or would swear to their being the attacking party, and they had to be discharged. The police-sergeant produced an enormous stone which had been hurled through the window, and a desperate-looking stick shod with lead for about four inches which he had found on the spot where he arrested the men. They were all well-dressed and well-to-do; two of them, I think, wore watch-chains, and one was the son of a very prosperous farmer.

In writing of Kerry I omitted to notice a striking instance of the effect which the agitation has had in preventing the investment of money in Ireland. Schemes for light railways from Tralee to Dingle, and from Killorglin to Valentia, were sanctioned by the Lord Lieutenant on the recommendation of the Privy Council two years ago, but though interest has been guaranteed by the baronies, it has been found impossible to procure the money. The estimated cost of the former line, which would cover a distance of 37 miles, is £120,000, on which 4 per cent. is guaranteed, and it would enable the fish caught at Dingle one day to be sold in Dublin the next. At present it costs £1 to send a cartload of fish from Dingle to Tralee; the journey takes 12 hours to

accomplish, and the fish are, of course, greatly deteriorated. The estimate for the Valentia railway is £112,000, on which there is also a guarantee of 4 per cent., and these lines would be of immense service in opening out the two great promontories of Kerry ; but the agitation has scared away capital, and the projects are in abeyance.

## LETTER VIII.

CLARE, *September 20.*

It is difficult for people at a distance to realize the complete triumph of lawlessness which prevails in many parts of Ireland. The law of the land seems to have no terror for the people, and the law of the League reigns supreme. As an instance of the difficulties which surround a landlord who attempts to enforce his rights, I may notice some events that have recently taken place in connection with a property belonging to Mr. Mahon, in the county Clare, which is managed by his relative, Mr. Richard Stackpoole. Three of the tenants, O'Donnell, Mulconry, and Hickie, owed from one-and-a-half to two years' rent each last September, and half a year's rent was to be forgiven in each case if the remainder was paid by February. They did not avail themselves of the offer, and were consequently turned out on the 28th of June. O'Donnell and Hickie broke open the doors of their houses and



went back into possession, for which they were summoned and committed to gaol for seven days. As soon as they came out they trespassed again, and were imprisoned for a second term of two and three weeks respectively. Houses were then built for them adjoining their former holdings by the National League, and the following description of the proceedings from the *Munster News* of the 25th of August is worth giving in full :—

Erecting Sentry-boxes for Evicted Tenants.—The National Leagues of East Clare, the Thradaree Branch particularly, may well feel proud of the great gathering of the Leagues that assembled at Newmarket-on-Fergus to assist the people of Newmarket, Carrigerry, and the Wells parishes in building sentry-boxes at Kilulla, on the property of Mr. T. G. S. Mahon, for three evicted tenants. At 10 A.M. contingents from the several districts in the local branch assembled, and from that hour to 11.30 contingents from the following branches arrived :—Ennis, Doorra, Kilkishen, Clare Castle, Ballyea, Quin, forming a splendid body of men, with their beautiful flags. Crusheen was represented by its patriotic band and a very large following of the gallant men of Upper Bunratty, Barefield, Cluna, Carrahan, Kilraughtish, and Spanceil Hill, with the well-known Stars and Stripes that led them to many a Land League meeting in years gone by. The classic hill of Tulla was represented by its National band and patriotic sons, who feared not Forster's buckshot nor Clifford Lloyd's bloodhounds in the days of coercion. The men of Sixmile-bridge, followed by the Cratloe boys with their neatly-designed banners and honest J. Hardgrove leading them, were much admired. When all were assembled at Kilulla cross-roads, they were about 3,000 persons and

about 300 horses and cars. The great majority of the cars carried stones to build the sentry-boxes; some cars brought timber for the roofs, some had straw and reed for thatch, some had sand and lime. The Ballyea cars had lime, and the Kilkishen cars had turf from Clonloun bog, a distance of 10 miles from Kilulla. At Kilulla Cross, Rev. J. Loughnane, Adm., addressing the people, said that he had received a letter that morning from Mr. Thomas Frost, with a request to read it for the meeting. The letter stated that Mr. Thomas Frost, P.L.G., objected to have a sentry-box erected on his farm for one of the evicted tenants, as he was getting £35 per year abatement from Mr. Richard Stackpoole, and it might injure him to let the people erect the house for the poor tenants, who had all his sympathy, and that he would give said evicted tenants all the support in his power.

A VOICE.—Frost is in the same position and boat as his fellow-tenants, and he ought not to object.

FATHER LOUGHNANE.—I have read the letter for you, and I leave it to you to do what you think is right.

A VOICE.—All who are for building one sentry-box on Frost's farm let them hold up their hands. (Immediately every hand was raised up amid cheers.)

FATHER LOUGHNANE.—We will go on to Mr. Hannan's land. Go on, men.

The procession re-formed and marched to Mr. Hannan's land, the bands playing and the people cheering. A portion of the procession went to Mr. Frost's farm. Operations commenced at once on Mr. Hannan's land, and the building progressed rapidly. A messenger arrived and stated that Mr. Frost was on his land and would not allow any person to enter on it to build the house. There was great excitement at this, and some person said, "Let the people, with the exception of those who are at work here, take the flags and one band and proceed across the fields to Mr. Frost's land and commence operations." This order was immediately obeyed. The scene would remind one of an army advancing

by battalions, with skirmishers in front, the band playing "God save Ireland" in the centre, and each battalion carrying its flags. It was an animated scene, those hundreds of athletic Claremen bounding over walls, leaping the river, marching quickly on, and forming into a solid body as they ascended the hill to Mr. Frost's farm. District-Inspector M'Donald and a large posse of the Royal Irish Constabulary were with Frost, but that did not deter the people. Frost again said he would not allow the people to build the house, but the people did not mind him; they opened a gap in the wall and let the horses and cars go in with the stones, &c., and the work proceeded at once. The district inspector, instructed by Mr. Frost, wrote down the names of those they knew, and it is believed that they will be prosecuted. The people divided into three large bodies, and the three sentry-boxes were building at the same time. The bands continued playing all day, and everything passed off to the satisfaction of the people. It was gratifying to see how warmly the beloved priests were received when they appeared at each of the houses. Father Loughnane, who is known and respected for his manly, straightforward, and just disposition, without the slightest inclination to vindictiveness or selfishness, was cheered at each of the sentry-boxes when he went to see how the building progressed. The people of Thradaree showed how they love and respect their true-hearted minister. There were priests from outside parishes present also, who were warmly cheered. When the sentry-boxes, which are 22 feet long by 14 feet wide in the clear inside, were finished by 6 P.M., Mrs. O'Donnell and her helpless family were put into possession of one of the houses, Mrs. Hickie and family into another, and the widow Mulconry into the third. I may say that O'Donnell is undergoing a fortnight and Hickie three weeks' imprisonment in Limerick Gaol for taking shelter in the inclement weather in the out-houses which they erected themselves. It is the second term of imprisonment with them. When possession was given the people gave cheers

for their priests, for the National League, and groans for bad landlordism and tenants who would not be with the people and their fellow tenants. The Newmarket band then headed the procession and marched back into the village amid scenes of joyous cheering.

The latest intelligence is that the tenants, having completed their terms of imprisonment, are not only keeping guard over their old farms from the "sentry-boxes," but cutting and saving the crops, and the landlord appears, for the moment at least, practically powerless. Only ten days ago the houses of two men who had taken some grazing on another property of Mr. Mahon's at Cragbrian, were attacked, a gun being taken from one and shots fired into the house of another.

Mr. Stackpoole has been at war for the last six years, though till that time he was most popular as a landlord, sportsman, and large employer. One man who took a farm from him was visited at night, pulled out of bed, and shot in the foot, and the place is now worked by the Land Corporation. Three tenants took some grazing from him last year; two of them were taken out of bed and shot, but not mortally, and the third, who was supposed to be friendly to the popular cause, had a bullet fired over him in his bed. They all gave up the grazing in consequence, though so anxious had they been to get it that they had paid the full rent in advance.

A shopkeeper from Ennis also took a place from him, but was obliged to give it up after spending a considerable sum of money upon it. Mr. Stackpoole dispenses with police protection, as he considers it rather a questionable security to have men walking behind him with their rifles on full cock, but he has the best protection of all in his reputation of being a dead shot. "It is an unpleasant thing," he remarked casually, "to know one's life is not safe for a moment; but I never have a revolver out of my pocket, and they know it."

The remarkable thing about the murders in Clare is that most of them have been committed without any assignable cause. This was so in the case of M'Mahon, who was shot two years ago near Ennis; of Quigley, who was shot sitting over the fire in his cabin last spring; of Meere, who was shot towards the end of June; and of Macnamara, the farm servant, who was murdered near Kilkishen quite recently. None of these men had in any way offended against the unwritten law. They had not taken farms from which others had been evicted or worked for any one who was boycotted, and the only conclusion is that they knew too much either as members of secret societies themselves, or that they had acquired information which was not considered safe in their keeping. M'Mahon, Meere, and

Doloughy, who was shot four years ago for herding the farm from which the Hynes family had been evicted, were all murdered on the high road in the same locality within two or three miles of Ennis, and it was for taking a farm which had been surrendered by Hynes to the Bank of Ireland, adjoining that from which he was evicted, that Green was shot at while I was at Ennis. He was attacked at a very narrow point in the road, and if the gun had not been a very bad one he must have been infallibly killed, as the entire contents of the charge were lodged in his back just below the shoulder. "It was a great shot, sir," said my car-driver; but, as the man could not have been more than four or five yards from the muzzle of the gun, my friend's ideas were rather limited. "'Tis fighting for the land they are," he added by way of explanation.

The Tulla district is about the worst in Clare, but the whole county is in a thoroughly disorganized state. Near Tulla there is a large boycotted farm on the property of Major Molony, which was being trespassed upon by the adjoining tenants when a sudden descent was made upon their cattle and they were seized. Proper provision, however, had not been made for protecting them, and a crowd of about 300 people assembled and carried them off by main force. A coffin was lately hung up on a tree on the

farm, with a notification of what any one who takes it may expect. In the same way the meadow on Mr. Stephen Woulfe's property is boycotted, in order, it is believed, that the tenants may prevent a public auction and get it at their own price, and he has had to get down fifteen emergency men to save it. Boycotting appears to be made use of for the furtherance of private ends and the gratification of petty spite in the most marvellous manner. The former keeper of the Court-house at Tulla having thought it advisable to leave the country in 1883, his place was filled by a shopkeeper in the town named M'Garrigle, who entered into a contract to keep the Court-house in repair for a period of five years. About a year afterwards his predecessor returned, and after a considerable time had elapsed it seems to have occurred to him that he might utilize the National League for the purpose of getting back his former place, and M'Garrigle was boycotted for "grabbing" the situation. He refused to give it up at the suggestion of the League, with the result that his business in the town has been completely ruined.

In another case in the same county a man who was refused by a girl used his influence with the League to have her and her family boycotted, and they are now suffering under the ban of ostracism solely because she rejected his suit. A remarkable

case of boycotting is that of the Littletons, who took an "evicted farm" five years ago. The father was to be seen walking about with policemen on each side of him, and his sons drove their horse with one hand and carried a revolver in the other. One Sunday when they arrived at chapel they found themselves locked out, and having taken their seats early the following week, no one else would enter the building. A compromise has, however, since been arrived at, by which a place is partitioned off for them, so that their neighbours may not be contaminated. The hostility towards them was dying out, I am told, but when the Crimes Act lapsed it revived in full force.

Sometimes the members of the League find themselves hoist with their own petard. The late president of the Ennis branch took proceedings against a tenant who keeps a bootmaker's shop in the town, and refused to pay his rent without a reduction. The bootmaker put the process and decree in his window, and the president was boycotted, a great demonstration being made with bands and other accompaniments, which formed an excellent advertisement for the boot shop.

The following is a copy of a letter signed in full by a Roman Catholic curate and sent to a farmer in this county :—



*March, 1886.*

Sir,—I am directed by the Committee of the — — branch of the Irish National League, of which I am secretary, to forward you the accompanying resolution unanimously passed at their last meeting.

Yours respectfully,  
—— C. C. (Secretary).

Resolved,—That, in the face of Mr. ——'s persistent occupation of the —— meadows, in defiance of public opinion so strikingly manifested in the case of the aforesaid meadows during the past year, and he thereby shows that he disrespects and defies the interests and the feelings of his less prosperous neighbours, we most emphatically condemn the action of this gentleman, and we are sure that when the public will learn of it they will know how to treat him, and it is our opinion that any person holding communication with the above-named gentleman, while he persists in his present action, is as much an enemy of the National cause and disrespects and defies it as much as Mr. —— does.

2d. That our secretary be directed to get copies of this resolution printed, in placard form, and posted, as well as forwarded to the following branches.

And a list of no less than nine branches is appended.

It was at Ennis, it may be remembered, that Mr. Parnell laid down the law of boycotting just six years ago, in the well-known words which have borne such marvellous fruit.

The West Clare Railway was one of the first and largest undertakings under the Tramways Act. It was begun in 1885, but after a time it was found impossible to procure the necessary funds on the

security of the guarantee. A loan was, however, subsequently granted by the Board of Works, with the sanction of the Treasury, and the line is expected to be ready for traffic next year. It runs between Ennis, Corrofin, Ennistymon, and Milltown Malbay, and will give a great stimulus to trade in the western portion of the county. Should it ultimately be extended to Kilrush, the connection with deep-water carriage would be a great advantage.

Another important public work in county Clare is the reclamation of land at the estuary of the Fergus. Acts of Parliament have been obtained authorizing an intake of 7,000 acres, but only one section of about 1,400 acres has at present been taken in hand. The works were begun in 1879, and are of an extensive nature, including a massive sea wall three and a half miles in length. Between two and three years ago the contractor was obliged to resign his contract, and the Board of Works, who had already made considerable advances, took over the work, which is now approaching completion. It is very doubtful whether, considering the present value of landed property, the cost, which amounts, I believe, to about £110,000, will ever be realized; but the expenditure has been of great benefit to the district, and the reclaimed land will add considerably to the rate-bearing area of the county.

Tulla is curiously situated on a steep hill, and there is a pretty bit of country beyond it towards Ballinahinch and Maryfort, where Colonel O'Callaghan has been badly boycotted for a considerable time ; but it is on the coast of Clare that the tourist will find most to interest him. He may visit Kilkee from Limerick by taking the train to Foynes, where Lord Monteagle has turned his water-power to account by starting a saw mill, at which none but native labour is employed, and the workmen seem to have become very skilful under the guidance of the manager, who spent three months in England to learn the trade. Foynes is remarkable as an Irish village without a single thatched cottage. Unfortunately the pier, like so many others in this country, should either have been built on a different site or made a little longer to be really useful. Here the traveller embarks on board the steamer, which carries him down the broad waters of the Shannon, past Mount Trenchard and the Knight of Glin's, to Tarbert and Kilrush, where a boycotted horse ran last year disguised in a coat of paint. On the edge of the pier stands a wonderful row of car-drivers, eagerly stretching out their whips and vying with one another for a fare ; and as soon as the boat is alongside she is invaded by a hungry army of touts, who seize upon your luggage, every package being

carried off by a different individual. When you have collected them and got them placed on the car of your choice, a drive of ten miles through a bleak and barren country brings you to Kilkee, which fringes a horse-shoe bay, protected from the Atlantic storms by the Duggerna rocks on the south, and on the north by George's Head. The cliff scenery of the rocky coast is very fine. South of the bay is a naturally-formed amphitheatre, a puffing hole, and splendid rocks from which to watch the waves dashing up and scattering their spray. Further south stands the ruined castle of Dunlecky, showing very early masonry, and nearer Loop Head are some curious natural bridges of rock, with the sea running under them. From Kilkee you may drive to Milltown Malbay, where Mrs. Morony has been carrying on a vigorous land war with her tenants, and past the cliffs of Moher, which rise 600 feet sheer above the sea, to Lisdoonvarna, famous for its sulphur and chalybeate springs, and largely patronised by the Roman Catholic clergy.

There is a beautiful five-light window in the ruins of the old Franciscan monastery at Ennis, but the churchyard is shockingly kept, broken pieces of tombstones, branches of trees, and even bones lying about among the over-grown grass and weeds. The former church, with its old-fashioned pulpit stuck up against

the east window and the reading-desk below, is tacked on to the ruin, but it is now replaced by a handsome modern building. There is a tall column in O'Connell Square with a statue of the Liberator, who sat for Clare in the House of Commons; and in the outskirts of the town I came across a monument which purports to be,—

Sacred to the memory of  
Allen, O'Brien, and Larkin,  
Who suffered death in Manchester,  
Through love of their country,  
November 23, 1867.

But its real object would rather appear to be the glorification of the committee and other gentlemen through whom it was erected, as three out of the four panels are devoted to them.

## LETTER IX.

GALWAY, *September 25.*

GALWAY is a town of departed greatness. The courtyards of the houses and highly-ornamented stonework are relics of the days when Spanish merchants lived and flourished there. The empty store-houses and silent flour mills bear witness to a more recent, but none the less departed, period of prosperity. Before the days of free trade Galway was a flourishing place, but now that foreign ships bring in their cargoes of flour instead of wheat, the milling trade is nearly ruined; and if flour is cheap, the offal, consisting of bran and pollard, which is most valuable food for cattle, pigs, and poultry, and cost from 3s. to 3s. 6d. per cwt. when the wheat was ground on the spot, has doubled in price—a serious result to the farmers generally.

The looms of the Jute Spinning Company, which was established nearly twenty years ago, have also been silent during the last twelve months, as their capital was insufficient to enable them to hold on

when the bad times came and their stock accumulated. Marvellous to relate, however, through the energy of some of those interested, and the forbearance of creditors who have agreed to take their claims in part or wholly in shares, a new company has been formed to take over the business, and there is every prospect of the works reopening in about a month's time, and of their affording employment to some 400 people, who have suffered severely since they were closed. There is also a fairly prosperous brush factory, which was started sixteen years ago by an enterprising Englishman, who was attracted to the country by the facilities it offered for sport. Another Englishman has lately attempted to establish a fish-curing business, but, after erecting the necessary buildings, he cannot get the people to fish for him. Englishmen, moreover, complain that between the Sundays and the holidays, and the headaches consequent on the holidays, nearly half the 365 days in the year are exhausted.

Galway is also badly off with regard to docks. The dock now in use only gives a depth of sixteen feet of water over the sill, the consequence being that the large ships of the present day have to be lightened before they come in, at considerable cost, which prevents the Galway merchants competing with Dublin further than Ballinasloe. The Harbour

Board borrowed money from the Board of Works, with which they have constructed a new dock having a depth of twenty-six feet of water over the sill, but they were unable to borrow sufficient to dredge the channel outside, and the work is therefore for the present useless. Near the docks is the well-known Claddagh, a collection of thatched cabins, curiously built in lines and squares, and forming a village in itself. The Claddagh folk live apart from the rest of the community, having their own special rules and customs, their own priest and place of worship, and intermarrying only with each other. They do not fish at all in winter, and will not go out, though the bay may be full of fish, until a certain day, and until all have their nets ready and the priest has gone out and blessed the water. They have only one set of nets, which have to dry after being used before their owners can go out again. Various attempts have been made to supply them with larger boats and to improve their mode of fishing, but in vain. A considerable sum was recently raised by subscription with the view of purchasing good boats and tackle. A crew was to be told off to each boat, and the men were to receive wages out of their takings, the surplus being credited to each boat until it was paid for, when it was to be made over to them. The first boat was bought in Dublin, the crew



engaged, tickets taken, and arrangements made for the support of their families. They were to go to Dublin, see some good fishing, and then bring the boat round; but at the last moment they struck. Such business-like philanthropy did not commend itself to them, and they demanded that the money which had been subscribed should be handed over to them to thatch their houses or deal with as they pleased, and it had to be returned to the donors. Sir Thomas Brady, Inspector of Fisheries, also bought a steam trawler this year, and took a crew of Claddagh men on board, but they mutinied at Kinsale, and he had to give them up as hopeless.

The county of Galway, with the exception of the Woodford District, is fairly quiet, but the imprisonment of Father Fahy has naturally caused some excitement in the town. The bellman went round the evening before he came in to rouse the people, with the result that he was escorted to gaol by an enormous crowd. It was then made an excuse for a holiday; a good deal of whisky was imbibed, and the proceedings not unnaturally culminated in a riot in the evening.

At one village in this county a farmer, who had got on by industry, had one of his bullocks killed; soon after two of his heifers were let down into a well, with their legs tied together, and when he

asked the people what he had done, they said they had nothing against him, but that he had so many cattle and so many sheep and they had none. There were thirteen men, I am told, who were at the bottom of all the mischief in this district, but the day that Mr. Forster's Coercion Act was expected to pass they all went off to America.

I visited some tenants in this county in company with the landlord. They all showed the most unaffected pleasure at seeing him, and the relations existing between them seemed to be of the most cordial nature. The first man was evidently broken by drink, and his son and daughter were working the farm. It was only "a shiver in the head," he told us, and he hoped soon to be all right again. At the next house the woman received us with the heartiest of welcomes, while her husband joined in with his *mille failtha*. He could not speak English, and it was hard to drive it into them, his wife said, when they were old. She hoped there were good times coming, "and that you and I may see them together," she exclaimed, turning to the landlord. We then visited a younger couple, who seemed to be living very comfortably with a large family, and without any help from America. The man brought us out to see what a good crop of oats he had on a bit of reclaimed bog, and the potatoes, he said, were grand.

His wife kept a small shop, and the landlord, finding what a high price she paid for tea, got her, some time ago, a chest of the same Indian tea that he was using himself at 2s. a pound; but she brought it back in great distress, saying that her customers would never buy such a coarse leaf—in fact, they will have none but the finest China tea at 3s. and 3s. 6d. a pound.

These were all small tenants, rented at £6 a year, which they pay without any reduction, and all seem prosperous and contented. I also spent a spare half-hour the other day in looking through two or three hundred letters received by the agent of a large property which is very moderately let, but on which no abatement has been given. They were all from tenants, most of them simply forwarding the rent in the most business-like manner and asking for a receipt. Several enclosed the rent with many thanks for time given; a few asked for further time, and not more than half-a-dozen complained of the depression and the difficulty of paying. The moral is that the people are well enough disposed if only they are left alone, and inclined to be honest if they are only permitted. I visited some other tenants who had gone into court, and who, as might be expected, are less contented. One of them said he had got his rent reduced by as much as the landlord

would drink in a day ; but as it appeared that £2 had been taken off £23, his allowance was rather liberal. Another man said his land was the dearest in Ireland—£2 an acre ; but, as the landlord had previously told me it was less than £1, I asked how much his rent was and how many acres he held, but he was not disposed to enter into these particulars. “One acre of that,” he said, pointing to another farm, “is worth three of this ;” and it is very remarkable how often the Irish tenant thinks he would be better off if only he had his neighbour’s land, while it never seems to strike him that the difference may be caused by good farming as compared with bad ; and, as a rule, they are bad farmers. They mow their land year after year ; they neither till well nor manure ; they do not weed or cut their thistles ; they expect the land to do everything for them, and that they are to do nothing for it.

Along the road from Galway to Oughterard are to be seen a number of gentlemen’s places deserted and going to ruin, Burke of Danesfield and Martin of Ross having gone with the rest. Aughnanure Castle, one of the old strongholds of the O’Flahertys, stands well on a rock overlooking Lough Corrib, but some degenerate O’Flaherty has built an ordinary outhouse against the tower, and spoilt the picturesque appearance of the ruin. Oughterard is

a wonderfully good-looking village for the centre of so poor a district, the houses, with one or two exceptions, being well thatched and whitewashed, and the people, who had come in for market-day, looked comfortable and prosperous; but it is along the coast of Galway that the poorest and most miserable of the population are to be found, attracted there, it would seem, in the hope of picking up a living by the kelp trade, which has fallen off very much of late years, the price per ton being only half what it formerly was. Driving from Glendalough to Roundstone we pass Ballinahinch, formerly the residence of the Martins, who "reigned over" nearly 200,000 acres in this district, the greater part of which now belongs to Mr. Berridge. The history of this property is a curious one. Old Colonel Martin ruined himself with contested elections, and the estate came to his son, the last of the Martins, hopelessly encumbered. The late Mr. Thomas Wentworth Beaumont met him casually, went over the property, and thought so highly of it as a mineral property that he offered to pay off all the debts and give £100,000 besides for the estate, which Martin refused to part with, though he accepted a loan of £40,000 to pay off a pressing creditor. Subsequently Mr. Beaumont gave precedence to the Law Life Insurance Company in order to help Martin, and it was Mr.

Beaumont's son who brought about the sale in 1852; but he realized nothing, as it was bought by the company for less than the amount of their own claims. The property seems to have been curiously managed in Martin's time. He had half-a-dozen agents, and his rents were chiefly paid in oats, bog deal, fish, &c. He got nothing for the shooting and next to nothing for the fishing, which now forms a considerable item in the receipts, as the angler pays 10s. and 15s. a day. The oyster fisheries used to yield £4,000 a year, but they have been dredged out and ruined. Mr. Berridge holds 160,000 acres of the old property, which he bought in 1870. He has 1,827 head tenants, but the number of occupiers is less, several having more than one holding. The rents range from £1 to £200, most of them being only a few pounds, but there are two or three large graziers on the property. The reductions made by the Land Court have been very considerable, in some cases amounting to as much as 50 per cent., and the rates and taxes for all tenants except leaseholders are paid by the landlord, who hardly receives enough to satisfy the outgoings.

My car-driver was an old fellow who had lived as stable-boy, groom, and coachman with "ould Martin," as he called him, "and ridin' out wid Miss Martin on her pony; so I have seen better days,"

he said. He remembered when Martin paid a hundred labourers in the week, and he "couldn't say one of them had a bit of bread or a cup of tea from Monday to Saturday." "And now they all have it," he went on, "and won't look at stir-about or milk at all. Every shilling they get goes to the shop for tea and bread; that's no food for labourin' men, and it's ruinin' them."

Between employment and charity the people in the congested districts have never had so much done for them as this year. In the first place there are no less than twenty piers being constructed by the Board of Works on the coasts of Galway and Mayo under the Act of 1883, which authorized an expenditure of £250,000; there are probably as many smaller ones being constructed under the Piers and Roads Commissioners, who have had £20,000 placed at their disposal under the Relief of Distress Act passed this year; under the same Act another £20,000 was given to six of the poorest unions for relief works, and last, but not least, there was Mr. Tuke's distribution of seed potatoes. The expenditure of the £20,000 intrusted to the boards of guardians seems to have been attended with the grossest abuse. In the Clifden Union the guardians got £4,369 and spent £7,400, and out of a popu-

lation of 24,000 nearly 19,000 were receiving relief under the Act for three or four weeks. In the Westport Union they got £4,781, and spent £9,700, leaving £5,000 to fall on the Poor-rate, which will probably have to be as much as 9s. in the pound in consequence, though the guardians fully believe that the Government will make good the deficiency. The money appears to have been scattered in the most reckless manner. Some got relief who were themselves ratepayers, some who were ashamed to go themselves sent their servants to work for them and so secure the relief tickets, and some farmers put their names or those of their children on the books as a proof that they were unable to pay their rent. They got 2s. a day for six hours' work, the work being in many cases only a pretence; and it is said that out of the £30,000 or £40,000 that has been spent there is scarcely value for £500. The people were to be seen sitting on the roadside smoking their pipes and "putting in the day;" others attended in the morning, got the gangers to put down their names, and then went about their own affairs. One man in the Westport Union brought eight bullocks to a gentleman resident in the district and sold them for £40. He apologized for coming so late in the evening, but said he had been at the relief works till two



o'clock, and then he had had to go to "the upper farm" and "pick them out," thereby showing that he had more than one farm and more than eight head of cattle. He did not appear at all ashamed of taking the relief, as when his neighbours were getting it he saw no reason why he should not. "When it's going," they said, "we might as well have it."

Payment for the work was given in tickets for meal, but I am told that they got tea, sugar, and even whisky with them.

In the Westport Union a number of extra relieving officers were appointed, whose only recommendation was that they were advanced Nationalists, and they dealt out the tickets wholesale without even bringing the applications for relief before the board.

It is said, on the other hand, that if there had not been some exceptional relief this year there would have been starvation, and that in such cases it is impossible to avoid a certain amount of abuse. There has been a large quantity of new seed potatoes brought into the country within the last few years; but where the old ones were sowed last year there was a failure, and a certain number of families were, in consequence, absolutely destitute and in need of relief. But when the relief was found to be going

they all rushed in for a share of the plunder, and the result has been very demoralizing. Indeed, some people are firmly convinced that the Achill islanders will sell their potatoes in the winter and have a famine.

## LETTER X.

MAYO, *September 30.*

THE drive from Letterfrack to Leenane is the cream of Connemara. About two miles from the former place we enter the pass of Kylemore, where Mr. Mitchell Henry has effected a transformation scene more marvellous than that of any pantomime, and made a garden out of a wilderness. The castle is beautifully situated at the foot of a rugged mountain, with the lake almost washing its walls, and surrounded by the woods which must have been planted almost with gold dust. In the greenhouses may be seen bananas, pine apples, and every rare kind of fruit, flower, and fern; while the splendid crops of oats growing on the reclaimed bog land are, perhaps, still more wonderful. On the south side of the pass is the range of the Twelve Pins, of which I was only able to make ten; but as a gentleman who has been looking at them from his windows for thirty years tells me he cannot count more than nine, I think I did fairly well. My car-driver, on the other

hand, said he could count the twelve "quite handy," but the movements of his whip were so rapid that I confess I was unable to follow him. Further on we came to the Killery, a curious arm of the sea which stretches inland for a distance of nine miles, with picturesque mountains rising on either side, after the manner of the Norwegian fiords. The road runs for some distance along its shores to Lecnane, from which the views of the bay and mountains are most exquisite. This is the centre of the Joyce country, and it was not far from here that the terrible Maamtrasna murders were committed, the secret of which was gradually wormed out of the people by a clever police officer, who spent his time fishing in the neighbourhood, and brought the assassins to justice.

The drive on to Westport is comparatively tame till Clew Bay and the shapely cone of Croagh Patrick come into view. Westport is a decaying place, and the great storehouses which were built when oats were largely exported are now almost empty, and little trade is done. It is also a centre of absenteeism; Lord Sligo, Sir Roger Palmer, and Lord Lucan, the principal landowners, being none of them resident. The road to Achill runs through Newport, prettily situated on the banks of a river, and further on is Rosturk Castle, Mr. Vesey Stoney's

residence, standing out boldly on the shore of the bay. The sheriff was expected there next day, and the people as I passed were flocking up to pay the rent and costs, which amounted, in some cases, to two and three times the rent that was due. At Mulranny there is a pier, recently built, which is absolutely useless. The people were crying out for it, but when it was finished they refused to give up two or three miserable patches of land to make a road to it, and the few boats there are lie drawn up on the beach. At Achill Sound the long talked-of bridge is at last being constructed, and will be of immense benefit to the islanders, who have hitherto experienced great difficulty in conveying not only their cattle and pigs but even themselves across to the mainland.

The modern history of Achill dates from a visit paid fifty-five years ago by the late Mr. Nangle, a Protestant clergyman, who came to the island with a cargo of Indian corn during one of the periodical famines to which the inhabitants have always been subject. Struck with the primitive simplicity of the people, their uncivilized manner of living, and the absence of any place of worship, he took a lease of 430 acres, on which he built the little village of Doogort, familiarly known as "the colony." He subsequently went through England and raised sub-

scriptions, with which he purchased over two-thirds of the island, and made it over to trustees. His main object was to proselytize, and at first his efforts met with some success, which naturally engendered opposition, and there are now not more than 350 Protestants out of the entire population. Major Pike holds a large property bought by his father, and his demesne, planted with Austrian pine, forms a marvellous contrast to the wildness that surrounds it. Lord Sligo has a townland held by a middleman, Lord Cavan another, and Mr. Weldon holds a lease of about 4,000 acres, which he took over from Captain Boycott some years ago, when that gentleman migrated to the spot where he was destined to add a word to the English dictionary.

Achill is certainly an extraordinary place for a population of nearly 6,000 souls. The island consists of the wildest mountain and moor, and, though somewhat sheltered on the west, is terribly exposed to the Atlantic storms. The villages are most extraordinary clusters of low cabins, with round-backed roofs and holes for chimneys, huddled together higgledy-piggledy, as if for mutual protection and warmth. And the people pour out of them like rabbits from a burrow. The ordinary dwelling consists of a single room, with a channel in the middle; one end is occupied by the cattle, pigs, and poultry, and at the other

there is a fireplace, a bed, a dresser, and a spinning-wheel. A very small aperture does duty for a window, and between the smoke and the darkness and the dirt it is difficult to distinguish anything. There are no outhouses and no sanitary arrangements. And yet the people seem happy and unconscious of the misery they are living in, and to which they and their fathers have always been accustomed. Even when they go to England year after year, they come back without any desire to change their old ways and habits. It is up-hill work trying to improve them. Lord Cavan spent £3,000 in improvements during the six years previous to the Land Act of 1881 without any increase of rent. There were seventy or eighty holdings on the townland, but he consolidated them, and they now only number from forty to fifty. He drained the land and made bridges of railway sleepers to prevent the people driving their cattle through the drains and breaking down the banks; but in a few months the drains were stopped and the sleepers carried away. He built half a dozen good houses, with three rooms each, and a shed for cattle. The people were got into them with great difficulty; they find slates cold after the thatch, and, above all, they object to windows, which let in the light of day upon the abominations within; and four out of the six houses are now empty. He planted bent-grass

to prevent the sand from drifting, but as soon as it grew they cut it down.

The people are naturally quiet and unsophisticated, but there has been a great change latterly. Every man in Achill is now a member of the League, the priest being a most active president; there is a committee in every village, and the island is at present organized to pay no rent. The women seem to work hard both here and on the mainland, reaping with the sickle and carrying heavy loads on their backs. Sometimes a whole family may be seen saving the little crop of hay or oats. A boy of fourteen constituted himself my guide as I walked up from the village of Duagh to Keim, where there is a pretty little bay sheltered by fine cliffs on either side. I asked him when he would go to work in England. Not till he was twenty, he said; and he didn't know that he would ever go, "for work is hard in England." He would like to go to America, "America is a fine place." He said he worked with his father, and the reason he was not working that day was that all the crops were saved; but when I asked him which was his father's land, on our return to Duagh, he pointed out a field of rye that had not been touched. The people say the potatoes are "middlin' fair," which probably means "very good," and admit that the crops are much better



than last year. They have no fences in Achill, but each man has a "strip" on which he grows his rye-grass and potatoes. They do not weed at all, and the potatoes seem choked with chickweed, which is left to feed the cattle. The rents are very small, from 2s. 6d. to 10s. an Irish acre, and they seldom exceed £2 in all. The Achill people, like their fellows in the other congested districts, are not Irish farmers so much as English labourers. They sow their crops in the spring and then go off to England and Scotland for the hay season and the harvest, bringing back often as much as £10, and sometimes even more. Their holdings are of the same value to them that an allotment is to the ordinary labourer. They have a lodging for themselves and their families, and plenty of turf for fuel, while the rye-grass supplies fodder for their cattle, and the potatoes food for themselves. They are in a chronic state of poverty, and whenever there is anything like a failure in the potato crop famine ensues. They could not make a living out of the land if they had it for nothing, and the rent makes very little difference, one way or the other. Emigration seems the only remedy, but emigration does not find favour with the priesthood. They suggest migration as an alternative, and would put back the people on the large grass farms from which they were formerly

cleared away. I discussed the matter at length with one of the advocates of this proposal, an able man, who would formulate a scheme to the best advantage. Large farms, he says, do not answer now; the farmer lives like a gentleman, employing labour, and it does not pay; whereas the smaller man who can work his land with the help of his family does much better. The State ought to buy up the land, and put it up to auction in lots of fifteen and thirty acres, which would be purchased by the sons of farmers who had made money and got on. They are the most deserving, and it should begin with them. I pointed out that this would not solve the problem of how to relieve the congested districts, and that to plant a cottier from the wilds of Galway and Mayo upon the rich grazing lands of Meath and Roscommon without capital or skill would be useless. His answer was that they could be settled on the holdings as labourers for these farmers, who would have to build houses and make fences and so forth; but this was not quite consistent with his first position—namely, that farmers could not afford to employ labour now-a-days. Mr. Parnell's Land Migration Company, the only experiment hitherto made in that direction, has been a hopeless failure, and in one case on the coast of Sligo, where an attempt was made to move some of the people a little inland,

they refused to leave the sea. But they seem of late years to have been only too anxious to emigrate, and Mr. Tuke's committee assisted nearly 10,000 persons to leave these poorer districts during the years 1882-1884, most of whom, from reports received, appear to have done well. Mr. Tuke's rule has been to assist families, and not individuals, except in particular cases, which saves the country from being stripped of the able-bodied part of the population, who would in the natural course of things be those most anxious to go, and leaves a certain number of holdings to be consolidated with others. It is difficult for old people to accommodate themselves to new methods of living, but if the families are properly selected, none will be chosen which do not contain bread-winners among their younger members.

There are, as I mentioned in my last letter, a great number of piers and harbours being constructed on the coasts and islands of Galway and Mayo, with the view of opening up the fishing, and facilities have been offered to the people for obtaining loans for boats and nets. Many of the sites, however, seem to have been badly chosen, and some of the piers will be almost useless. The great object of those locally interested seems to have been to get the money spent, regardless of anything else.

Most of the boats on this shore are mere canvas-covered coracles, which do not require a pier at all, and the people do not make use even of their present opportunities. I have made a point of asking for fish at every place I have stopped at along the coast, and have only got it twice—herrings on the first occasion, and fluke the second. When I was at Leenane a gentleman caught a boatful of enormous pollock in a couple of hours, but the fishermen did not care to follow his example, though they might have caught enough in a very short time to give them food for the winter if the fish had been salted and kept. They are not a seafaring people, and the coast is stormy enough to frighten men who are less timid; but if the fishing on the west coast is to be really developed, it must be by building two or three good harbours capable of accommodating larger boats, and opening out the deep sea fishery, though some people doubt whether even that would prove successful. It is essential for the development, not only of the fishing industry, but of the country generally, that light railways should be constructed to certain places; the most necessary lines being these:—From Galway to Clifden, a distance of forty-seven miles, which would open up the Connemara district; from Castlebar, or some point between that and Westport, to Achill Sound, which would be less than forty

miles; and from Ballina to Belmullet, which is nearly fifty statute miles. These districts are all too poor for the baronial guarantee which is necessary under the Tramways Act; but if the Government were to undertake the construction of these lines they would in all probability be amply repaid. They would open up the country, remove the causes of distress, and give a large amount of employment, which would be far better policy than that of giving out constant doles of money from time to time, the effect of which is only to demoralize the people without producing any permanent benefit to the country.

## LETTER XI.

MAYO, *October 5.*

FROM Achill to Belmullet is only twenty miles as the crow flies, but the journey from London to Holyhead is nothing to that which I underwent. The sea being a little lumpy, the boatmen were not disposed to take me across, and I had to drive six miles over about the worst road I ever travelled to a point which goes by the euphonious name of "Bull's Mouth," where I got a crew to row me over to the mainland, and carry up my things to a public-house near Colonel Clive's place, where camellias, I am told, grow and flower in the open air, protected by shrubberies from the fury of the storms. Then followed a drive of twenty Irish miles through an apparently illimitable expanse of brown bog, which covers mountain and valley as far as the eye can reach, with scarcely a habitation or a living creature to be seen. Belmullet is a small seaport, situated on a narrow neck of land scarcely four hundred yards wide, between Broadhaven on the

north and Blacksod Bay on the south, with a canal connecting the two. The pier on the latter bay is being enlarged by the Board of Works, while a new quay is being built on the Broadhaven side, and if a light railway were run out to Belmullet, with two such splendid roadsteads it ought to open up a considerable trade.

The two islands of Inishkea lie off the Mullet promontory, and the inhabitants live under their own Sovereign. They are the best fishermen on this coast, and make a good deal by the lobster fishery; but their principal revenue is derived from the distilling of potheen, with which they supply the population of the mainland. The islands cannot be approached in stormy weather, and when the wind gets up they set the stills to work. If the police and coastguardsmen take advantage of fair weather to make a raid, the whole population put to sea in their canoes, and if one is singled out for pursuit they quietly drop anything illicit overboard. The sheriff had to make an expedition there the other day in search of rent, which was for the most part paid with costs, while those who could not pay got further time. It was rather too stormy for the gun-boat to get to the second island, and one of the party quietly suggested to some of the people that they might as well go over in a canoe and tell their

friends to come in, which they did, and the others came over in the most amenable manner with the money in their hands. The islanders did not blame the landlord or the sheriff, but only those who had advised them. The potatoes at Inishkea have been damaged by the storm, and in places along the seaboard they have suffered from the same cause, but generally they are good.

The coast road from Belmullet to Ballina, though it involves a drive of fifty-eight English miles, is worth taking. There is some fine cliff scenery, including the stags of Broadhaven and Downpatrick Head, and beyond the latter promontory is Kileummin, the western point of Killala Bay, at which the French landed in '98. The marks of their tents are to be seen as plainly as the day they dug the trenches, and close to the bridge which crosses the river at Palmerstown lie some of the cannon which they abandoned. There are several graves of Frenchmen at Kileummin Head and elsewhere through the district, and the country people pile stones over them and hold them in great reverence. Ballina is prettily situated on the river Moy, in which there is excellent salmon fishing, and Mount Nephin stands out well in the background. A great quantity of bog iron ore, a kind of peat strongly impregnated with iron, is exported from here, and



used, in the first instance, for purifying gas, after which it becomes extremely valuable for the manufacture of aniline dyes. The landlord, I am told, gets a royalty of 1s. a ton, and the tenants are paid 5s. for raising and delivering it at the quay.

There are no outrages now in Mayo and not much boycotting, but the organization of the League is strong. It was in this county that the agitation originally began, the first meeting having been held at Irishtown and the second at Westport, but it has now rather burnt itself out. The people seem generally well disposed, and there is quite a different spirit to that which prevails further south. There were two events which had a great effect in checking outrage here—one was the discovery of the Crossmolina murder conspiracy and the conviction of eight of the men who had been at the bottom of all the mischief in the district; and the other was the fate of Jennings, who was shot in the attempt to assassinate Mr. M'Gloin, a local landlord. This was on the 4th of May, 1882, two days before the Phoenix Park murders. Mr. M'Gloin was driving along the road in the evening between Foxford and Swineford, and was stopped by a cart drawn up across the road, whereupon a man sprang out from behind it, presented a revolver at his breast, and pulled the trigger. Luckily it missed fire, and

before he had time to try a second shot his intended victim pulled out a Winchester rifle from behind him, and the man wavered and ran. Mr. M'Gloin fired after him as he ran across country, and at the third shot he fell, and with such violence that his left shoulder was dislocated. He was found lying with his right arm stretched out, holding the revolver, and his finger on the trigger. It must have been a weird spectacle, as described to me by an eye-witness, to see the police keeping guard over the body through the night pending the arrival of the coroner, with their watch fires throwing a lurid light over the scene, and the people keening round them.

The property of Mr. E. H. Pery, of Cooleronan, near Ballina, recently afforded a typical instance of the adoption by the tenants of the counsels of the League and of the consequent result to them. Mr. Pery, I was told by an impartial witness, had been the best of landlords, and had done everything for his tenants that could be done, spending money on draining, fencing, and houses, and assisting them in bad times by getting cargoes of Indian meal, coal, and seed potatoes, which were issued at cost price, the meal and coal being paid for by work done on the tenant's holding, and the people said whoever would be paid Mr. Pery would. The rents were formerly

25 per cent. above Griffith's valuation, the amount which Sir Richard Griffith himself said should be added to obtain the fair letting value, his valuation having been made for the purpose of taxation, and they were reduced 18 per cent. by the Commissioners. Last winter the tenants deputed the parish priest to demand a reduction of 50 per cent. on the judicial rents, which the landlord refused to grant, and the rents were consequently withheld. The landlord thereupon served 120 notices of ejectment upon his tenants, each of whom must have owed at least a year's rent before that step could have been taken. A correspondence ensued between Mr. Pery and the parish priest, in which the former takes his stand upon the judicial rents. The Land Act of 1881, he points out, took from the landlord much of what had, up to that time, been recognized by the legal tribunals of the country as his property, and relegated him to the position of owner of a fixed rent, which was subject to a periodical revision, the tenant having at the same time an interest conferred on him variously computed as equivalent to from 30 to 50 per cent. of the fee simple. Having, he says, accepted this law by going into Court and getting as much as they could show cause for, how can the tenants, in common fairness, expect at the hands of their landlords such an act of grace as a reduction

of the judicial rent? What sort of reply would the tenants give to a counter request by the landlord that they should consent to give up or abridge their fixity of tenure? It is to be presumed, he points out, that the Land Act was administered with due regard to the fluctuations of seasons and prices, and should prices rise the tenants certainly would not offer an increase of the rent fixed by the Commissioners. Why, then, should the landlord, debarred as he is from participation in prosperity, be mulcted for depression, and why should he give back part of a share of a bargain forced on him by the Legislature? Father Conway in return thanks him for his letter, in which he hoped to find "the olive-branch of peace." "But no," he says, "it appears the sword is not to be sheathed. You are yet determined that the sentence should go forth to your tenants, 'Prepare for starvation or eviction, for impossible rents, or your hearths and homes I must have.' "

The law proceedings took their course, and at every stage the landlord offered the tenants to withdraw on payment of half a year's rent and the costs incurred up to that stage, but the offer was on each occasion contemptuously refused. The decrees were finally granted, whereupon the tenants nearly all settled, paying £200 costs for £300 of rent accepted;

only five were actually evicted, of whom three were put back as caretakers, and the other two have since redeemed. Of the tenants who were not proceeded against less than half paid. The accounts of the estate for the year 1885 show that only £1,341 15s. 9d. was collected, leaving £1,958 15s. 9d. of outstanding arrears, which does not look much like hardship on the part of the landlord.

It is a relief, after the long tale of boycotting and outrages that meets one further south, to find a county so free from both, and in which the relations between landlord and tenant are so amicable as appears to be the case in Sligo. The land is generally good, the tenants are in a fair way of living, and the landlords appear to have met them half way, though they have, as a rule, no intention of giving any abatement on judicial rents. Driving south through the properties of Colonel Cooper, of Markree Castle, and Colonel Ffolliott, of Hollybrook, and north through those of Mr. Wynne and Sir Henry Gore Booth, the country generally has a prosperous appearance and shows the influence of resident proprietors.

The town of Sligo, moreover, does not wear the aspect of decay which strikes one in so many Irish county towns. There is a handsome court-house, town-hall, and cathedral, and the trade of the place

appears to be considerable. Timber, iron, slates, and flour are largely imported, and a good export trade is done in cattle. The millers have taken to grinding Indian corn, and the owner of a large mill at Collooney is endeavouring to establish a woollen factory. Things wore a serious aspect in Sligo at the time of the riots, but when it was discovered that the authors of the outrage at the Roman Catholic cathedral were members of that church and only seeking to create mischief, the Roman Catholic inhabitants subscribed a large sum to pay for the windows broken by the mob, and the Protestants, not to be outdone, waived a considerable part of their claims, the consequence being that the feeling between the two parties is now better than ever. Mr. Evelyn Ashley's property in the extreme north of the county has an interesting history. It was part of the land given to Lord Strafford in the confiscation of Connaught. He made it over, whether by sale or gift, to Sir John Temple, Master of the Rolls in Ireland in the time of Charles I., and through him it came by direct descent to Lord Palmerston. It was in the hands of a middleman till 1840 and let in rundale, a system under which one man, perhaps, held half a dozen detached pieces in different places. When Lord Palmerston got the estate into his own hands he proceeded to square up the hold-

ings, make roads and drains, plant skirtings of trees to break the wind and bent-grass to prevent the drifting of the sand, and even made gardens in front of the houses—a piece of civilization for which Irishmen as a rule do not seem to care—spending altogether about £40,000 without any increase of rent. The rents have now been heavily reduced by the Land Court, especially in the cases decided this year, in some of which the reductions amounted to as much as 50 per cent. In one case a farm was formerly let at £50, and the landlord agreed to give the widow of the late tenant £40 a year for her interest, the incoming tenant undertaking to pay a rent of £60, which was reduced by the Commissioners to £30, though the landlord is paying £10 more per annum to the former occupier. The land appears to be run out by the present holder, which may partly account for the reduction, as the Commissioners seem to fix the rent rather in accordance with the capabilities of the tenant than of the land. In another case decided last March, the valuation being £13, the old rent, which was £11 2s. 6d., was reduced to £6. I saw the farm, which contains nine acres of good-looking land, and it is difficult to account for such a reduction, unless on the assumption that the Commissioners were preparing for Mr. Gladstone's Land Purchase scheme. It is fair to add

that the landlord, having been a member of the Government responsible for the Act of 1881, did not fight the cases, but submitted himself to the decision of the Commissioners, though I believe he intends to test some of the latter ones by entering an appeal.

Lord Palmerston also built the village of Mullaghmore, with the view of making it a Brighton in the West, and constructed the harbour at a cost of £28,000. The parish priest, a fine old man of eighty-four, gave me a great account of all his goodness. He had built the glebe-house for the former priest, and when his successor was appointed, fifty years ago, the Bishop wrote to Lord Palmerston to ask if he might have the house. The reply did not come for twelve months, when Lord Palmerston wrote with many apologies for having mislaid the letter, and adding an acre of ground to the glebe for every month's delay. He used to answer every tenant's letter, though his rent might be only £1 a year, and when the people were emigrating in the famine time he sent clothes for them, and even ordered brandy to be supplied them on the boat in case they should be ill. "He was a wonderful man," said the old priest, "a wonderful man."

Mr. Ashley's residence is placed on the most ex-



posed spot of the very exposed promontory of Mullaghmore. “It’s a nice place in summer,” said my car-driver, “but a terrible place in winter, without a stick or a straw between you and the parish of New York, and the Atlantic waves dashing up behind the house.”

## LETTER XII.

DONEGAL, *October 9.*

THE state of Donegal seems on the whole fairly satisfactory. The people are naturally well-disposed, and, though there has been trouble here since the agitation began, the League is not very aggressive at present, and there is not much boycotting, nor does there appear to be any great indisposition to pay rent if the people are left alone. They have not, indeed, much reason to complain of their landlords, so far as I have been able to ascertain the facts. One of the largest proprietors in the county is Mr. Murray Stewart, who owns some 32,000 acres in the southern part of it. He succeeded to the estate in 1846, and between that date and 1865 expended no less than £45,730 in making roads and drains, building school-houses, reclaiming land, squaring farms, and assisting the tenants to build houses. The rents were only increased  $2\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. upon this outlay, but they have been reduced on an average 18 per cent. by the Land

Court ; while the purchaser of an adjoining property who doubled, and even in some cases, I am told, quadrupled, the rents only had them reduced 25 per cent., having spent nothing on the estate—one instance out of many which shows that the good landlords have suffered far more than the bad ones. A still more remarkable case is that of a property in this county which was inherited about twenty years ago by two gentlemen in equal shares, one of whom raised the rents 25 per cent., while the other left them as they were, and they were reduced in both cases from 20 to 25 per cent. Mr. Murray Stewart is an absentee, but whereas the rental of his property during the first twenty years of his ownership amounted in all to £130,167 4s. 6d., the sum remitted to him in that period was only £43,819, the balance having been expended in the foregoing improvements, taxes, subscriptions, and expenses of management. The effect of recent legislation has been to stop all expenditure on the part of landlords, and, while the small holder has got a few shillings off his rent, he has lost the employment which made the rent a matter of indifference.

Adjoining Mr. Murray Stewart's property is that of the Messrs. Musgrave, who have also been most improving landlords. They bought Glencolumbkille in 1868 from the late Mr. Conolly, better known as

“Tom Conolly,” and the neighbouring parish of Kilcar ten years later. They have expended altogether about £20,000 in improvements, of which more than half was paid in wages to the people. Their great idea recently seems to have been to open up the district by means of piers, which would enable the Sligo steamers to call on their way to Glasgow, and so afford a market to the people, who have to pay 50s. a ton for carriage of goods from Carrick to Derry. There is a large pier at Teelin, constructed by the Board of Works, with the assistance of the Messrs. Musgrave, who also intended to establish a store there, as well as a place for sheep and cattle to await the arrival of the boat. They further built a pier at Pulhurrin, about five miles from Teelin, at the base of a splendid freestone mountain, where they might have opened out a valuable quarry; but uncertainty in the political world has unfortunately checked all these projects. At Carrick there is a knitting industry established by Mr. Pattison, wholesale manufacturer of woollen goods, of London. The girls had no idea of knitting when it was started, but they are quick to learn, and there are now some 1,400 names on the books. They seem to make ladies’ and children’s clothes almost exclusively, and the things are beautifully knitted; even school children, I

was told, can earn as much as 2s. a week. A good deal of embroidery is also sent into this district from Belfast houses by parcel post, which has proved a great boon to the people in that way.

The fishing along the shore of Donegal Bay appears to have fallen off very much of late. The herring have not been coming in, and as the larger fish, such as cod and ling, usually follow them, that may possibly be the cause. The deep-sea fishing, on the other hand, has been very successful. Last year there were only three English trawlers in the bay, this year as many as fifteen. There is a very strong feeling against them among the local fishermen, who think they spoil their fishing. It will be a great advantage when the remaining four miles of the West Donegal Railway from Drummin to Donegal are completed, of which I believe there is now some prospect, as the fish can then be sent in to Donegal, and despatched at once by train. There is an excellent natural harbour, too, at Killibegs, and if a pier were built there and a light railway run out from Donegal, a distance of only eighteen miles, it would probably become the head-quarters for the fishing. At Glenties there is a very extensive knitting business carried on by Messrs. D. and H. M'Devitt, who have had as many as 7,000 names on their books;

but owing to the introduction of the knitting machine, coupled with the general depression, their trade is not quite so large as it was. I saw a long row of girls standing at the counter giving in the work they had done and getting more; and the bales of gloves, stockings, and socks of every pattern and description, including coarse blue stockings for the Yarmouth fishermen, seemed endless. It is indicative of the Irish character to find that the girls are very unwilling to undertake the finer kinds of work, though the payment is considerably better, and prefer the common knitting, which can be done roughly and without trouble. A light railway to Glenties has been projected under the Tramways Act, and would open up a thickly-populated district, from which there is a considerable amount of road traffic, but owing to difficulties about the necessary guarantee it unfortunately hangs fire.

From Dunglow to Gweedore the road passes through a wild country, with an astonishing number of cabins dotted about on land which appears to be nothing but a mass of rocks. Nearly every house, however, has a good stack of oats, though it is sometimes difficult to see where it can have come from, and they all have large piles of turf and patches of potatoes. Here and there is a good granite house, with neat stacks and trim fences, showing unmis-

takable signs of industry and prosperity. The district of Gweedore has been occupying public attention, not now for the first time. History repeats itself, and if we go back to the year 1858 we find that a most remarkable appeal was published by the local priests, which begins by stating that "in the wilds of Donegal, down in the bogs and glens of Gweedore and Cloughanely, thousands upon thousands of human beings, made after the image and likeness of God, are perishing, or next to perishing, amid squalidness and misery, for want of food and clothing, far away from human aid and pity," and, after a harrowing description of the state of the people, concludes with a fervid appeal for charity on behalf of "these famishing victims of oppression and persecution." Mr. Hamilton, Poor Law Inspector, held an inquiry into the alleged destitution of the district, and found "potatoes at every house, either stored inside or in pits outside the premises," and "from two to five or six head of cattle" in almost every house he visited. A Select Committee of the House of Commons were appointed to inquire into the matter, and they found by their report, "That the district of Gweedore and Cloughanely is a wild and mountainous tract of country, inhabited for the most part by tenants holding small portions of land; that there are

among them many who are very needy, who, on any failure of their crops, are subject to more or less distress and poverty in consequence at one portion of the year, but that destitution such as is complained of in the appeal did not and does not exist; that this poverty among the people is not attributable to the landlords," and that the charges brought against them are "totally devoid of foundation."

There have of late been appeals to the public from the same quarter, not very dissimilar in character, and if an inquiry were held I venture to think the result would be very much the same; except that, great as had been the advance in the material prosperity of the people at that time as compared with the condition in which Lord George Hill had found them, there has been a still greater advance in the twenty-eight years that have since elapsed. The state of the district in 1837 is set forth in very quaint terms in a memorial addressed to the Lord Lieutenant by one Patrick M'Kye, a National school-master, which declares that—

There is about 4,000 persons in this parish, and all Catholics, and as poor as I shall describe, having among them no more than 1 cart, no wheel car, no coach or any other vehicle, 1 plough, 16 harrows, 8 saddles, 2 pillions, 11 bridles, 20 shovels, 32 rakes, 7 table forks, 93 chairs, 243 stools, 10 iron grapes, no swine, hogs, or pigs, 27 geese,



3 turkeys, 2 feather beds, 8 chaff beds, 2 stables, 6 cowhouses, 1 national school, no other school, 1 priest, no other resident gentleman, no bonnet, no clock, 3 watches, 8 brass candlesticks, no looking-glasses above 3*d.* in price, no boots, no spurs . . . . and not more than 10 square feet of glass in windows in the whole, with the exception of the chapel, the schoolhouse, the priest's house, Mr. Dombrain's house, and the constabulary barrack.

This memorial was given in evidence by Lord George Hill before the Committee of the House of Commons as a true representation of the state of things existing when he purchased in 1838. What he did for the people has often been placed on record, and an old man who has been on the property for over sixty years poured out a kind of chant or psalm of lamentation to me, setting forth all his goodness and the ingratitude of the people. "When he gave them a new cut," he said, "they had it seven years free, and the rent was never raised; but there's nothing of that now." "He made roads, and built a store and a quay, and they might have died in the famine only fur 'm; but there's nothing of that now." "He gave them meal and blankets, and when they were poor he'd bury them; but there's nothing of that now." There were sixty-four ejectments carried out last August on the property, the amount of rent due being in no case less than three years', and ranging from that to five.

Half the evicted tenants were put back as caretakers, and most of them will probably redeem before the expiration of the six months allowed for that purpose. Many of them admit that they could have paid the rent as it became due, but the accumulation of three or four years, with the addition of costs, made it a more serious matter. When it is remembered that the rents are as low as five, six, seven, ten, and fifteen shillings, and that most of them do not exceed 25s., it will be obvious that the rent is not very difficult to make up. They get for this a house and land, such as it is, with free grazing, turf, and seaweed for manure; and a man who gets a house and land, with turf and grazing, for 5s. a year is not badly off. The value the people themselves set upon these holdings may be best gathered from the enormous sums given for the tenant right. The following is a list of sales effected on this property since January :—

| Name of Tenant.   | Annual Rent. |    |    | Amount obtained for Tenancy. | Number of Years' Purchase of Rent. |
|-------------------|--------------|----|----|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
|                   | £            | s. | d. | £                            |                                    |
| Nelly O'Donnell . | 1            | 5  | 0  | 108                          | 86                                 |
| Hugh Sweeny .     | 1            | 4  | 0  | 51                           | 42                                 |
| Owen Boyle .      | 0            | 12 | 6  | 51                           | 82                                 |
| Fanny Ferny .     | 1            | 0  | 10 | 40                           | 40                                 |
| M. Gallagher .    | 1            | 0  | 0  | 50                           | 50                                 |
| John M'Monigle .  | 0            | 10 | 0  | 31                           | 62                                 |
| Fanny M' Connor . | 0            | 5  | 0  | 16                           | 64                                 |
| Hugh Gallagher .  | 0            | 13 | 1½ | 60                           | 91                                 |
| Sarah M'Bride .   | 0            | 9  | 0  | 20                           | 44                                 |

Most of the purchasers were, I believe, already tenants or the sons of tenants on the property. The man who gave £108 has a holding for which he pays only 25s. a year, and the man who purchased from Hugh Sweeny for £51 has a holding rented at £2, two years' rent being due, which he professes to be unable to pay.

A very remarkable occurrence in connection with these evictions was the incursion which took place into the workhouse a short time before they were carried out. Over 300 people from Gweedore entered the house in the course of a few weeks, the object being to show their inability to pay rent, and to throw expense on the landlord, who has to pay almost the entire poor-rate, only seven or eight of the holdings being valued at more than £4. As many as eighty-two came in on one day, but very few remained for more than a week, as, when they were brought before the Board to be examined, it was found that nearly all had sheep and cattle, and scarcely any were really destitute. Thus, in the week ending the 26th of June, 112 were admitted and ninety-three discharged, and in that ending the 10th of July seventy-two were admitted and sixty-seven discharged. One woman, who had applied for admittance, was in the act of churning when the cart came for her, and said it must wait till she had

finished; another family were driven to the work-house in their own cart, and the son wanted to be paid for bringing them in. The expense to the union of providing bedding and making arrangements for the reception of such a number of people was, of course, very considerable; and the tenants seem to have expected it to fall entirely on the landlord, but in this they were mistaken, as when the cost for any electoral division exceeds a certain amount it is spread over the entire union. As it is, Captain Hill has to pay 4s. in the pound for poor-rate on a valuation of £1,120, and, seeing that he is receiving no rent, the property can hardly be looked upon as a remunerative one. In this, as in other things, the people are believed to have been acting by the advice and under the direction of their parish priest.

There will be two-and-a-half years' rent due by the tenants, with few exceptions, in November; and Captain Ward, the agent for the property, has issued a circular pointing out that it is quite impossible that tenants can be permitted to continue in occupation of their holdings without payment of rent, and that if they do not pay at his approaching collection he will be obliged to take proceedings against them. I believe a meeting is to be held when the men come back from working in Scotland to decide what course they shall adopt.

I saw the people going home from chapel on Sunday. They were all well and comfortably dressed, the bright-coloured shawls and white aprons of the women presenting a picturesque appearance, and there were no signs of distress; but while the population in these districts is at least double what it ought to be, there must be poverty. There are some wretched hovels tacked on to others, the result usually of a marriage in the family. Another "smoke" is added, and the holding is sub-divided in spite of the landlord. The people think nothing of having cattle in their houses, but, however uncivilized, it does not appear to be unhealthy, as fever is unknown, and their lot generally is far better than that of the people who inhabit the slums of London. Like their brethren further south they have been very much demoralized by the indiscriminate distribution of charity. In 1879 and 1880 £40,000 was spent in Donegal alone, and some of those who got relief admit that they were not in want, but when their neighbours who were better off than themselves were getting it they saw no reason why they should not. \*There are some

\* The statements relating to Gweedore were canvassed at great length in a letter addressed to the editor of the *Times* by the Rev. J. M'Fadden, P.P., Gweedore, and published in the *Derry Journal*, in which he specially repudiated the "show houses."

show houses in Gweedore to which members of Parliament, newspaper correspondents, and other Englishmen who come to study the Irish question on the spot are sure to be taken, and if their visit has been expected they will possibly find the family seated round a dinner of seaweed. I heard of one gentleman who spent a day in visiting the houses in one of the congested districts.\* His approach was signalled wherever he went, and in every house he found the people at dinner, with some selected potatoes the size of marbles to eat, and it did not strike him as curious, until it was suggested to him, that they should be dining from ten o'clock in the morning to five in the evening. Still, I would advise others to come and study the question on the spot. They will find the people civil and pleasant, and they will find excellent quarters at Carrick and Gweedore. I would advise all who love fine scenery and bracing air to take a tour through the highlands of Donegal, and to those who usually seek for health at the German spas I would suggest as an alternative a course of Irish car-driving.

\* Not Gweedore.

## LETTER XIII.

BELFAST, *October 14.*

HAVING spent a considerable time in the South and West, I determined to see something of the other Ireland in the North. It is like a different country. Even in Donegal the change of accent strikes one, but on entering Londonderry it becomes pronounced; and it is not only in their accent, but in character and disposition, that the people are closely allied to the Scotch. They are a sturdy race, hardworking, independent, and thrifty. "You know very little of this country," said one man; "if twelve people want to send a letter to Dublin they'd go 'co.' in the penny stamp." I visited some substantial farmers in Londonderry who would answer very much to the yeoman class in England. The first was a prosperous man, who had built a house fit for any gentleman though he had no lease, and who agreed on a judicial rent under the Land Act without going into court. "Ye needn't ask me anything," he said; "yuv only to look at me to see

that I'm contented." He showed me over his farm-yard and offices, and from the appearance of everything I should say he certainly ought to be contented. He declared, nevertheless, that it was very hard now to make both ends meet, if a man is depending solely on the land. "It's not the rent," he said, "but the prices; and you English with your free trade are ruining us." His parting injunction was delivered slowly and with great emphasis—"When ye go home," he said, "tell them, whatever they do, not to give us Home Rule."

The next man I saw had raised himself by industry from the position of a common labourer, and had built himself a house fully equal to the last. He was content to live friendly with his landlord, he said, as every one ought to be, and he had fixed his rent with him out of court. He grew a good deal of oats and flax, and had a dairy of twelve cows. "I suppose you were glad the Home Rule Bill was rejected?" I asked. "Yes, and the last one too," he said eagerly. "Going to break our fifteen years' judicial lease! Whatever happens after, let us have our fifteen years at any rate." I visited another of the same class, who had had some disputes with his landlord and was less contented, though his house was, if possible, more magnificent than the others, and, like them, out of all proportion to the



size of his holding, which was only about 100 acres. He had always taken an active part in politics, he said, and was evidently an extreme Radical ; but he abstained from voting at the last election, as he would not vote for a Conservative and could not vote for a Home Ruler. Many of the Presbyterians in the North are, I believe, extremely democratic, and would be Nationalists if it were not for the fear of being ruled by Rome. This man also said that if he had nothing but the land he would find it very hard to keep square and do justice to his family ; but the open piano and handsome furniture showed what that meant.

Even in the loyal part of Ulster the tactics of the League are not unknown. The agent of a property in county Down tells me that at a recent audit the tenants, who were prosperous men and chiefly Presbyterians, came in a body and said they could not pay without a reduction of 50 per cent., which he refused to give. One man, who had purchased the tenant-right in a farm for £17 an acre, remained behind when the others left and asked to be accepted as tenant. The answer was that as he had just declared himself to be a pauper he could not expect to be accepted, whereupon the man pulled out a bundle of notes and said he could pay any time, only he was afraid. The agent immediately called back the

other tenants, and, when they had taken their seats round the room, asked his friend to repeat what he had just told him, but, finding him unwilling to do so, told the story himself, and then, turning to his son, who was a solicitor, directed him, if the rents were not forthcoming by five o'clock, to commence proceedings, and left; and before three o'clock £2,000 was paid.

The tract of land between Londonderry and Coleraine comprises the property granted by James I. to the Irish Society, which was established by Royal charter in 1613, consisting of a Governor, Deputy-Governor, the Recorder, and twenty-three others chosen annually from the Courts of Aldermen and Common Council of the City of London. They undertook, on their part, to lay out considerable sums of money in effecting the colonization of the province, and upwards of £60,000—a large sum at that date—was expended by the City companies in rebuilding and fortifying Derry, rebuilding Coleraine, and developing the resources of the province, and estates were allotted to each company in proportion to their outlay. The property of the society itself consists of the city of Derry, with some 4,000 acres adjoining; the town of Coleraine, with about 3,000 acres; together with the salmon fisheries of the Foyle and Bann, and the rents, after providing for

the cost of management, are devoted entirely to the benefit of those districts.

Derry and Belfast afford a striking contrast. The former is an old town, rich in historical associations and memorials of the past. There is the cathedral standing at the top of the hill, from the roof of which cannon were directed against the enemy during the memorable siege; there is Walker's monument, recently restored at considerable cost; and there are the famous city walls, kept in perfect repair, and forming a promenade a mile in circumference. The apprentice boys still celebrate the anniversary of the closing of the gates by attending a special service in the cathedral and burning the effigy of the traitor Lundy. They formed two companies of the Irish Volunteers in 1782, and their representatives attended the convention in Duggannon Church. But, though full of interest as regards the past, Derry is not behindhand in modern developments. The granting of perpetuity leases by the Irish Society has given a great impetus to building, and it is sufficient to walk along the quays to see that the shipping trade of the port is very considerable. A sum of £100,000 is now being expended by the Harbour Board in dredging and widening the channel of the Foyle, and the largest steam dredger, I believe, in the world has just been

built for them by Messrs. Harland and Wolff, of Belfast. An enterprising citizen, who served his time with them, is now endeavouring to set up a shipbuilding yard in Derry, and if successful it will be of great advantage to the place in giving employment to the men. The women have already a large amount of employment in the shirt factories, of which there are several, this being now the principal industry in Derry. I went over one of the largest houses, which employs 500 people in the factory and an immense number outside, as when the shirts have been cut out and prepared they are sent out to be sewn in the cottages, five or six hundred dozen being sent every week by this firm to be made in Innishowen, county Donegal. I believe some of the Derry manufacturers are establishing branches in the south of England, where, strange to say, they find labour cheaper ; but the work is not as yet so well done as in the Irish cabins. The shirts come in smelling strongly of turf, but are well washed and disinfected in case of accidents.

Belfast is essentially a modern town, and has no historical associations, but its progress has been marvellously rapid. The population, which was only 20,000 at the beginning of the century, is now more than ten times as much ; the valuation of the town, which in 1861 was £270,930, in 1881 was

£568,139 ; and the tonnage of the port has more than doubled in the last thirty years. The streets are wide and well paved, the buildings extremely handsome, and there is a general air of prosperity about the place. The thoroughfares are full of life and bustle ; every one looks as if he had something to do and intended to do it ; there are no corner boys and no beggars. The artisans are well housed, every one having a separate dwelling, and in the suburbs are a number of handsome residences belonging to the merchants. The environs are extremely pretty, and the road leading north, past Cave Hill, commands a fine view of the lough. There has been a decided revival in trade during the last four months, partly due, no doubt, to the general recovery which has taken place, but also to the rejection of the Home Rule Bill, which nowhere caused greater consternation than among the prosperous merchants of Belfast. The local stocks went down nearly 30 per cent. during the crisis, but have since regained 20 per cent. of that. The linen manufacture is, of course, the principal industry, and is worked on an immense scale by several houses. One of the largest is the York-street Spinning Company, which employs over 4,000 hands, and occupies three or four acres of ground in the centre of the town, while they have no less than

a thousand looms on one floor alone. There is the great house, too, of the Messrs. Richardson, who employ 7,000 or 8,000 people between their spinning and bleaching works, and at whose splendid warehouse may be seen beautiful specimens of damasks. There are the Royal Ulster Works of Messrs. Marcus Ward and Co., whose artistic productions are known all over the world, but who do not disdain to print such uninteresting things as railway tickets and labels for soda-water bottles. They never produce a Christmas card without printing at least a quarter of a million copies, and they bring out sixteen new varieties every year. Their latest novelty is their Unionist and Gladstone stationery. The former is stamped with two Union Jacks crossed and intertwined with the shamrock, rose, and thistle, the whole being surmounted by the crown; while the latter bears a vignette portrait of the late Premier, with his destroying axe in the background. There are also iron foundries, distilleries, mineral water manufactories, and various other industries, but the most imposing of all is the iron shipbuilding yard of Messrs. Harland and Wolff, on the Queen's Island. There every trade connected with shipbuilding is carried on, down to sail-making, joinery, and upholstery. The smiths' department has a weird effect, with a hundred fires blazing and a hundred anvils

at work, and the engine-making department is on a gigantic scale. In another department there are huge iron masts, between two and three hundred feet long ; in another, sheets twenty-seven feet in length, ready to be fitted to the side of the vessel, and in another immense boilers that look as if they would sink any ship in which they were placed. The works stand on reclaimed slob land. Thirty years ago they covered only two acres of ground, 150 men were employed, and 800 tons was the most that could be turned out in a year ; now they occupy about forty acres, and give employment to 3,000 men, while nearly as much as 50,000 tons have been turned out in a year. Everything is arranged in the most methodical manner ; the various departments are all connected by tramways and telephone, and the works lit by the electric light.

The Queen's Island men have attracted considerable attention in connection with the Belfast riots, and have perhaps had more blame imputed to them than they deserve. The immediate cause of the outbreak appears to have been the attack made at the docks by a Roman Catholic upon a Protestant, who had formerly worked at Messrs. Harland and Wolff's yard. This was witnessed by the Harbour labourers, who joined with some of the Island men in an attack upon the navvies the following day,

but whereas out of the nine who were returned for trial in connection with that attack the Harbour workmen, who only number 350, contributed five, the Island men, numbering 3,000, only contributed four. But be that as it may, the fact is that the tension and excitement caused by the Home Rule Bill were so great that an outbreak of some sort was almost inevitable. The Protestants were unfortunately fully convinced from a speech of Mr. John Morley's that he was sending the police to shoot them down, and this was confirmed in their eyes by the firing which took place at Bower's-hill barrack, the result of which was to cause the more respectable inhabitants to sympathize with the rioters as against the police. A tradesman living in the Shankill-road, but who has also a place of business in the Falls-road, the Roman Catholic quarter, told me no one could witness what took place without being filled with indignation against the constabulary. The latter had, of course, great provocation, but if they had been properly handled they need never have been withdrawn into barracks. The crowd, seeing them retire, advanced with redoubled energy, flinging enormous stones through the windows, and the police lost their heads and fired in all directions. I counted no less than twenty-three bullet marks on the wall between the two upper windows of a house



at the corner of Northumberland-street and the Shankill-road, the shots having evidently come from the direction of the barrack. A woman was quietly sitting with her child in one of the windows the whole time, believing the police were only firing blank cartridges, as she said there was no rioting going on at the time, and, of course, the people are convinced that they were firing at her. On the other hand, the heap of stones to be seen in the barrack testifies to the fury of the mob. The Orangemen are naturally indignant that the rioters should be designated in certain quarters as an Orange mob, the fact being that they were for the most part boys of eighteen and twenty, while the Orangemen belong to a body which they feel they must not disgrace; but the lower class in Belfast, to whichever side they belong, are undoubtedly a bad lot. It is also a great mistake to look upon every one in the North as being necessarily either Orangemen or Roman Catholics. There is a large body of Protestants who were enthusiastic Liberals and Gladstonians prior to the introduction of the Home Rule Bill, and the Orangemen have always been looked upon rather as a Conservative organization.

The competition between the local newspapers appears to have done a great deal to fan the flame, many of the incidents being much exaggerated, and

the return of Mr. Sexton for West Belfast did not tend to allay the feud. But perhaps the worst feature of all was the divided control of the authorities. Between the divisional magistrate, the resident magistrates, the local magistrates, the town inspector, and the district inspectors, no one appears to have known who was in command, while there were constant changes and successive visits of officers of various grades from Dublin. The introduction of a number of resident magistrates who were complete strangers to the place does not seem to have been a judicious step, as local knowledge, especially in a place where the rioters have such facilities for suddenly appearing and disappearing up by-streets as is the case in Belfast, is of the first importance. It is absolutely essential that one man should be responsible for the maintenance of order, and the town inspector would seem to be the proper person. It is also very much to be hoped that all party processions on either side may be put an end to, as where the material is so inflammable they simply serve as the match to gunpowder; and that the streets in the disturbed districts may be paved with something less dangerous than "Belfast kidneys."

## LETTER XIV.

DUBLIN, *October 18.*

I ALLUDED in a former letter to the worst instance of abuse I have met with in connection with Boards of Guardians—namely, the expenditure on relief works in the six unions among which the grant of £20,000 was allotted in the spring of the present year. An examination of the figures appearing in the Parliamentary return of the number of persons weekly in receipt of relief in each of those unions is very instructive. Thus, in the Clifden Union during the week ending the 1st of May only 204 persons were in receipt of out-door relief; in that ending the 8th of May, 623 persons; while the week after the number rose suddenly to 17,276. During each of the three following weeks over 18,000 were receiving out-door relief; but in the week ending the 12th of June the number dropped to 3,553, rising again the following week to 14,253. During the corresponding weeks in 1847, the year of the famine, the number of persons receiving out-door relief in that union, one

of the poorest in Ireland, only averaged 264 a week. In the other unions in question the variation in numbers between one week and another is equally remarkable. In the Union of Oughterard 111 persons received out-door relief in each of the three weeks ending respectively the 24th of April and the 1st and 8th of May, but in the week ending the 15th of May the number rises suddenly to 16,012, and in the Westport Union it falls in one week from 16,279 to 7,546. In the Swineford Union it rises from 9,959 in the week ending the 15th of May to 25,611 in that ending the 22nd, dropping as suddenly in the following week to 12,047. In the Galway Union it falls from 6,752 in one week to 32 the next; and if only 32 persons were in need of out-door relief in the week ending the 12th of June, it can hardly be that 6,752 required it the previous week. The late Chief Secretary was, I believe, fully warned of the probable consequence of entrusting this money to the Boards of Guardians, but the charm of allowing people to manage their own affairs was too great, and the result has been to plunge those unions in hopeless difficulty, as they expended in all nearly twice as much as the amount allotted to them. The key to the action of Boards of Guardians is often to be found in the fact that they are not managing their own affairs, but other people's, as

in these poorer unions almost the entire poor-rate falls on the landlords. They pay, in the first place, the whole poor-rate for land in their own occupation ; they pay the whole for tenants whose holdings are valued at and under £4 ; and in the case of tenants whose holdings are assessed above that sum they pay half. Of the unions scheduled under Mr. Morley's Relief Act, the Clifden Union contains 4,027 holdings, 3,246 of which are valued at and under £4 ; and the Oughterard Union contains 2,637, of which 1,803 are also valued at and under £4. In the Swineford Union there are 7,421 holdings, and 4,646 valued at and under £4 ; in Westport (with which Newport is now amalgamated), out of 6,425 holdings, 4,013 are valued at and under £4 ; and in Belmullet, where the rates are very high, out of 3,519 holdings, no less than 3,068 are valued at and under £4. In such a case as this it will be obvious that the amount of the poor-rate is almost a matter of indifference to any one but the landlords, and the elected guardians, who are almost invariably Nationalists, can afford to be reckless in their expenditure. In the Glenties Union, county Donegal, the total poor-rate last year amounted to £2,437 11s. 4d., of which £1,224 17s. 11d. was paid by the landlords for tenants valued at and under £4, leaving

£1,212 13s. 5d., of which part would be paid by the landlords for land in their own occupation, and the remainder divided between the landlords and tenants with holdings valued at more than £4. But though in this case the landlords pay more than three-fourths of the poor-rate, they have only seven representatives on the board, as compared with twenty-one elected guardians, of whom twenty, I believe, are Nationalists; and yet it has been seriously proposed that property should have less representation than it has at present. As the law now stands the boards are composed half of elected and half of *ex officio* guardians, who must be magistrates residing or having property in the union; but in some cases there are not sufficient magistrates to equal the number of elected guardians, and many of the *ex officio* guardians are non-resident in their unions and unable to attend, so that in most cases the Nationalists can command a majority at the board. The proportion of voting power which owners possess, as compared with the amount they contribute to the rates, may be gathered from some of the instances mentioned before the Lords' Committee last year. Thus, at a contest in the Roscrea division of that union there were 479 votes representing property, and 540 occupiers' votes, although the owners contribute on a valuation of £8,508, and the

occupiers on £4,002; and in one division of the Edenderry Union the Nationalist got 148 votes and the Loyalist 128, although the supporters of the Loyalist contributed £122 13s. to the rates and those of the Nationalist only £42 15s.

It is, of course, in the expenditure on out-door relief that the guardians have chiefly run riot, using it extensively for political purposes and in rewarding tenants who have allowed themselves to be evicted. In the Glenties Union the average number of persons in receipt of out-door relief during the five years from 1873 to 1877 was 72·6, while in the five years from 1881 to 1885, after the board had passed under the control of the Nationalists, the average number was 195·3. In the Listowel Union, county Kerry, the cost of out-door relief in the year ending the 25th of March, 1877, was 8s. 9d., and in the following year, *nil*; while in 1885 it amounted to no less than £1,697 15s. 5d., and the total expenditure of the union, which was £3,203 1s. in 1878, in 1885 was £6,738.

It is not unusual to give as much as £1 a week to evicted tenants, the normal amount of out-door relief being from 1s. 6d. to 3s. Able-bodied men are, under the ordinary Poor Law, disqualified from receiving out-door relief, but this provision was relaxed in 1848 in favour of evicted tenants, who may now

receive out-door relief for one month, but no longer. This restriction is, however, sometimes evaded by obtaining a doctor's certificate that the man is unable to work, and there is an evicted tenant in the Killarney Union who has, I believe, received £160 during the last four years on the strength of a medical certificate, his rent having been less than £30 a year. In the Tulla Union, county Clare, where out-door relief had been given to evicted tenants in excess of the amount allowed by law, the auditor found the leaves of the book on which the entries had been made cut out, and was therefore unable to discover who authorized the illegal expenditure. The rate for the Glendree division of this union, which ranged from 1s. 11d. to 2s. 5d. during the years 1873 to 1879, was 4s. 3d. last year; in the Kilkishen division, where it was from 2s. 6d. to 2s. 8d. during those years, it was 5s. 8d. in 1885; and in the Tulla division, whereas it ranged from 2s. 1d. to 2s. 8d. during the same period, it was 5s. 10d. last year. The increase of rates has usually taken place *pari passu* with the increased control of the Nationalist guardians, and it is almost impossible to take up a local paper without finding that the bank is refusing to honour the cheques of some board or other. The guardians are unwilling to endanger their popularity by striking a sufficient rate to meet their expendi-



ture or by insisting on the collection of the rates. There are several unions at present hopelessly bankrupt, and the Government will have to determine how they are to be dealt with. Even if the boards are dissolved and paid guardians appointed, it will be almost impossible in some cases to levy a rate which will meet the liabilities.

The building of labourers' cottages under the recent Acts has largely occupied the attention of the guardians of late, and in this, too, they appear to have used their powers for the annoyance of those who are opposed to them in creed or politics. They select sites sometimes where there are more than enough cottages already, in order to get in persons who will be independent of the landlord, and endeavour to put them on evicted farms for the former tenants to occupy. In one union the guardians recently selected a site on ground which I myself saw completely covered with water after heavy rain, in order to annoy an obnoxious landlord, totally regardless of the future comfort of the unfortunate man who was to live there; and in another they chose sites for fourteen cottages on the property of a large landowner, every one being on the holding of a Protestant. The farmers are strongly opposed to having cottages built on their land, and frequently those who pretend to be very much in favour

of them at the board write secretly to their landlords asking them to oppose the schemes. I saw one man who was really in need of a cottage, and who spoke his mind very plainly. "You'd think they'd put you in a carriage," he said, "when they come round to ask for a shilling, but with all their talk they wouldn't do a ha'porth for you." The cottages cost usually about £100, on which interest at various rates, but averaging about 5 per cent., must be paid, whereas the highest rent a labourer will pay would be £2 10s. a year, and the remainder must fall on the rates. Already the labourers have begun to declare their inability to pay, owing to want of employment; and at a recent meeting of the Tulla Board it was proposed to give them a reduction of 4*d.* per week. I have even heard of a case in which a tenant is getting out-door relief from the guardians and paying them their rent out of it—a state of things which is expected to become very general.

The tendency on the part of the elected guardians is to turn the board-room into a local Parliament for the discussion of politics and other matters outside their proper business; and one of the witnesses examined before the Lords' Committee last year considered it a serious grievance that the *ex officio* members of his board "would not allow one word to be said except about in-door or out-door relief," and that

when he wished to introduce such matters as fixity of tenure and fair rent they refused to have them discussed. The guardians frequently pass resolutions on extraneous matters, and have copies sent to every Union in Ireland, the expense of printing and postage falling, of course, on the rates which are intended for the relief of the poor. I have before me a printed circular sent by the clerk of the Rathkeale Union, county Limerick, under the direction of the board of guardians to all the landlords in the union, calling upon them to give their tenants "an abatement of at least 50 per cent. in their present rents to enable them to tide over the present very trying time;" and the following is a copy of a resolution passed by the Mountmellick Board last year at the time of the Prince of Wales's visit:—

That as Ireland has received nothing from English rule and its institutions but 'cold indifference and injustice, her people, when they demanded their just rights, handed over to the system of Castle tyranny and landlord felony, we, therefore, the members of this National Democratic board, have no sympathy with the Prince of Wales's visit to Ireland, and we call on all Nationalists to shun shows and ball-rooms given in his honour. God save Ireland.

In most places where the Nationalists have got a majority the *ex officio* guardians have given up attending altogether. They found the members of the board determined to discuss political matters

rather than Poor Law business, and themselves not only swamped but liable to be insulted. The fact of its being unpleasant is, however, no excuse for neglecting their duty, though they say that it is useless attending, as any proposal coming from them, however beneficial, is sure to be opposed. The "scenes" which take place at the board meetings are very remarkable, and afford a slight indication of what we might expect in a Home Rule Parliament. The following account of a meeting of the Bantry Board has appeared in a local paper, one of the principal actors being Mr. Gilhooly, M.P.:—

Mr. R. Warner, rate collector, appeared before the Board and submitted a list of arrears of out-standing rates, from which it appeared that sums amounting to £65 were still uncollected by him. He had lodged £20 on Saturday.

Mr. Swanton's arrears amounted to £30.

After the items had been gone through,

Mr. BIRD asked Mr. Swanton if he was in arrears.

Mr. SWANTON.—No, Sir.

Mr. BIRD.—Mr. Gilhooly, then, stated a falsehood here some time since when he said I did.

Mr. GILHOOLY.—You are a contemptible cur—"Oh, oh!"—when you say I stated a falsehood. You are in the habit of stating falsehoods, you cur. ("Oh, oh!") (To Mr. Swanton.)—Did you not state, down at the post-office, to me that Mr. Bird was the agent for property on which arrears were due?

Mr. SWANTON.—No. There were no arrears for which Mr. Bird had not paid.

Mr. GILHOOLY.—You told me what I stated in the post-office, in the presence of the postmaster.

Mr. BIRD.—The statement is a deliberate falsehood.

Mr. GILHOOLY.—Only for where you are I would catch you by the nose, if you stated I told a falsehood, you contemptible cur! (“Oh,” and cries of “Chair” and “Order.”)

CHAIRMAN.—Gentlemen, gentlemen, let us have no more of this.

Mr. GILHOOLY.—We all know that you, Mr. Bird, can state and swear falsehoods. (Cries of “Shame!”) You were “sacked” by Miss Kate Donovan for your infamous and outrageous conduct as her agent. (“Oh, oh!”)

Mr. BIRD.—I have a letter which I will send to to-morrow’s papers.

Mr. GILHOOLY.—And I have another letter, too. You took out a process, too, without authority, and it was dismissed. (To the Clerk.)—I wish you would ask Mr. Sullivan, the postmaster, if Mr. Swanton did not state to me in his presence that Mr. Bird was the agent to some of those people who were in arrear.

The CLERK.—Oh, don’t ask me to mix myself up in it at all. (A laugh.)

The CHAIRMAN.—Mr. Gilhooly and Mr. Bird, we cannot have any more of this. (Hear, hear.)

Some unimportant business was then proceeded with, and the board adjourned.

They sometimes get beyond the wordy stage; and at one meeting of the Clifden Board a guardian was assaulted, kicked, and pelted with ink bottles by some fellow-members of the board, against whom he has recovered damages in a court of law.

A gentleman who has had considerable experience of boards of guardians sums up the matter thus:—

There are good men in the country, but they are unwilling

to come forward in these times, and, if willing, would not be tolerated for a moment. Since 1880 only those who have qualified by either open or covert transgression of the laws of the land and flagrant and reckless defiance of law and order could hope to be elected; any man with a spark of independence would have no chance. It is the same with all boards, town commissions, and others. These men are, as a rule, ignorant in the extreme, wholly without any business capacity, and, like many of our present M.P.'s, men who, having hopelessly broken down in the management of their private affairs, think they can govern a country's. What can you expect from men of this class? The elections are carried out year after year under the grossest intimidation, for which the law, as it exists, has no remedy. As to finance, they simply know nothing about it, and the rates have invariably risen, in some cases 500 per cent., under their control. They don't know what honour, honesty, or straight dealing means; they do all in jobs, and their recklessness lately is astounding. They know they only pay a small portion of the rates, and are ready to suffer a little themselves if they can, as they hope and wish, utterly crush and ruin others.

Another gentleman, who is also in a position to speak with authority, takes a more hopeful view. His experience of elected guardians is, he says, upon the whole, by no means unfavourable. Bearing in mind their limited knowledge and necessarily narrow views, he thinks their duties are discharged with reasonable efficiency, and no very grave amount of jobbery. Of corrupt practices he would acquit them, considering the most serious errors of which they are guilty to be those arising from political sentiments or sectarian prejudice. In intelligence and

sound administration of the law he thinks they have strikingly improved of late years, and where some of the gentry have continued attending the boards of guardians, in disregard of the unpleasantness caused by the arrogant and combative tone of the Parnellite members, their influence has undoubtedly told in the transaction of union business. Holding these views about boards of guardians, he naturally feels no apprehension about county boards, though he thinks they would certainly need control, and that it should rest in some department presided over by a responsible Minister and member of the Legislature.

In England the Local Government Board is represented in the House of Commons by the President or Parliamentary Secretary; in Ireland it is practically without Parliamentary representation, for though the Chief Secretary is President *ex officio*, his attention is chiefly occupied with what may be termed Home Office duties. The Local Government Board in Ireland does not appear to have kept a very strong hand of late over the various boards of guardians. They have probably felt that the principle of allowing people to manage their own affairs was being recognized in higher quarters, and that their interference had better be exercised only in extreme cases. If we are to have county boards in

Ireland on which property is not duly represented, and which are not kept under strict control, it is to be feared they will result in terrible mismanagement. Those who believe in popular institutions say they will learn by experience ; but, judging from the action of the popularly-elected boards already existing in Ireland, the process of education will be slow, and the country will pass through a severe period of probation while it is going on.



## LETTER XV.

## CONCLUDING LETTER.

October 21.

IN travelling through Ireland at the present time the religious aspect of the question forces itself upon one's consideration. If we except the upper class of Roman Catholics and a certain number of well-to-do farmers and tradesmen who have refused to join the Nationalist movement, religion may be said to form the line of cleavage; and it is impossible to ignore the part which so many of the priests have taken in the recent agitation. A considerable number joined it because they found the people slipping away from them and because they were afraid of losing their dues, and it is alleged by way of excuse that but for their restraining influence things would have gone to greater lengths; but many, especially of the younger generation, have not only joined the movement *con amore*, but thrown themselves into the forefront and become the most

violent among the agitators. "They are not clergymen," said a Roman Catholic gentleman to me, "but revolutionary leaders. They hurry through the service and then mount the pier at the chapel gate and harangue the people by the hour." Sprung themselves from the people, and with their horizon bounded, perhaps, by the thatched cabin on the one side and Maynooth on the other, their sympathies are strongly on the popular side, and when they have mounted the political platform they are carried away by the excitement, and indulge in a violence of language which is certainly not calculated to promote brotherly love or Christian charity. Many, on the other hand, have been driven into it against their will, and while going with the stream inwardly deplore it. The mode in which they derive their emoluments, placing them, as it does, at the mercy of the people, strikes an outsider as singularly unfortunate. "They are living themselves," said O'Connell before a Committee of the House of Lords in 1825, "upon a kind of charity obtained from very poor persons—a situation extremely painful, and to which the sons of gentlemen will, of course very reluctantly, and only from superior enthusiasm, I will call it, submit." I have heard of cases in which a parish priest, having refused to take the chair at a meeting, has been threatened

with the refusal of his dues and given a quarter of an hour to reconsider his determination. If he yields, the people find that they are his masters, and his influence is gone; whereas those who have taken up a decided attitude and refused to have anything to do with the movement, though they may have suffered some temporary inconvenience, have eventually retained far more respect and control among their flocks. Those who are disposed to adopt this course and to restrain the younger clergy have their difficulties very much increased by the fact that the latter can point to the example set them by the highest dignitaries in their Church. The difference, however, which is observable in a district, according as the parish priest is a moderate man or the reverse, is very remarkable; but it is to be feared that the general result of the agitation has been to relax the bonds of religion, and the people through the country speak of their pastors with a want of respect which would have been unheard of twenty years ago.

Nothing is more striking than the advance which has taken place during the last few years in the dress and manner of living of the people. Many of their dwellings are still extremely miserable, but that is the last thing an Irishman thinks of improving, and the smart dresses which are to be seen

on Sundays, and often on weekdays, strike one as singularly out of keeping with the smoky cabins from which they come. No one can regret a reasonable improvement in such matters, but in many cases it is out of all proportion to their means, and is one of the principal causes which contribute to the difficulty of paying rent. There has been a great advance, too, in education, for whereas in 1841 the number of those who were unable to read was 52 per cent. of the whole population, in 1881 it was only 25 per cent. The counties which stand highest in this respect, taken in order, are Antrim, Down, Dublin, and Londonderry, and the lowest Galway, Mayo, and Donegal. I find in some letters on the condition of the Irish people written forty years ago, that so little did they know the commercial value of money that they were constantly in the habit of pawning it, and that the writer satisfied himself of the truth of this almost incredible state of things by visiting a pawnbroker's shop at Galway, where he was shown a drawer containing several bank-notes, and even a gold guinea, which had been pawned for various sums. Though this would be out of the question nowadays, some of their dealings in regard to money matters are still very peculiar. At one place I heard of a man who ordered some goods at a shop for which he was to get certain credit and pay

a high rate of interest accordingly, and when he had left the shopkeeper picked up a deposit receipt for £200, which the man had paid into the bank the same day, but on which the rate of interest would of course be very low. He had, I believe, every intention of paying for the goods, but did not seem to realize that it would be far better for him to have paid ready money and have a smaller sum at the bank. In the same way they will often borrow a sum of money, and pay interest for it, though they have other money lying idle at home, and think they are doing a very clever thing. It could be wished that they had improved their method of farming in the same proportion as their way of living. Some of the finest crops to be seen through the country are those of ragweed and thistles, and I have seen potato fields with weeds two and three feet high, completely concealing every vestige of potato stalk. They leave their hay out in cocks to the end of October, growing blacker and blacker every day, and destroying the ground on which it stands. I saw a farmer putting up a rick of rotten hay a few days ago while, within a stone's throw, his landlord's crop was all well housed and in good condition, showing that the fault was in the man and not the season. It is extremely difficult to get them to improve, and they look upon any effort in that

direction with great suspicion ; but if agricultural schools could be established in connection with the present national schools they might learn farming in spite of themselves. Something might be done, too, by the establishment of technical schools. About twenty classes are being carried on at present in different parts of Ireland, under the auspices of the Home Arts and Industries Association, chiefly for teaching wood-carving ; and at one which I visited, in county Limerick, the boys are turning out excellent work. They are quick to learn, and, having taken a fancy to the carving, they have shown great application, which is one of the qualities most lacking in the Irish character.

With regard to the land question, most people are looking to peasant proprietorship as the only solution ; and a certain leavening of peasant proprietors would, no doubt, be very desirable. Still there is no use shutting our eyes to the fact that converting the present occupiers into owners means perpetuating a perfectly hopeless state of things. According to the census returns for 1881, of the 499,109 agricultural holdings in Ireland there are only 150,139 which exceed thirty acres, and they represent a valuation of £7,290,000. There are 122,517 of between fifteen and twenty acres, representing a valuation of £1,536,357, while the number

of holdings under fifteen acres is 226,453, and their total value only £1,241,937. Of these 78,630 do not exceed five acres, and 16,879 do not exceed one acre. In Connaught 82·7 per cent. of the holdings do not exceed thirty acres, and the average value of these is only £5. On one townland in Sligo there are 200 tenants paying £100 of rent, and peasant proprietorship in such a case is tantamount to saying that no better state of things than this is ever to exist; while if they subdivide still further when the landlord's restraining influence is removed it will become infinitely worse. There are more people in Ireland than the soil can support, and it is idle to conceal the fact.

Unfortunately, it is the interest of the priests to discountenance emigration and to encourage early marriages. Every additional household is a source of income to them, and every baptism and every wedding brings in something. One priest, who lives in a congested district and looks on emigration as the only remedy, told me it was rank heresy to think so. If the people are to be left where they are, they must have employment, and the substitution of the farmers for the landlords will hardly improve their prospects in that respect.

The tenants have not as yet evinced much disposition to buy their holdings. Independently of the

fact that popular influences are at present opposed to it, an Irishman dislikes, above all things, being bound by hard and fast rules, and he dreads the precision and punctuality that would accompany rent-collecting by the State. "Will the Government give us any time?" is a common question, and if the answer is unfavourable they say they would rather keep the landlord. They like getting "time," and they like the bargaining and the beating down, while few of them are sufficiently provident to be influenced by the fact that in forty-nine years they will have the land for nothing, especially as they have been led to expect it in a very much shorter period on the same terms. Still, if they fully realized the advantages offered them by Lord Ashbourne's Act, it is difficult to believe that they would not avail themselves of it. Though that Act is extremely favourable to the tenant, it can hardly be regarded as a good one for the landlord, and the provision by which the seller is to guarantee the good faith of the purchaser, by leaving a fifth of the purchase money as security for the tenant's fulfilling his obligations, is certainly a remarkable one, introducing as it does for the first time the maxim *caveat venditor*. The effect of recent legislation has, unfortunately, been to leave no sense of finality. Each successive Act, while it has been heralded as a final



settlement, has only been made a vantage point from which to demand something more, and the tenants are not yet fully persuaded that the limits of concession have been reached.

\*There has been a decided improvement in the state of the country within the last two months or so. The majority by which Mr. Parnell's Bill was rejected inspired the people with the idea that the present Government is strong and not likely to be squeezed; and though I believe there is no doubt that something very like no-rent instructions were sent to the local branches of the League from headquarters not many weeks ago, the tenants have preferred to take their own counsel, and have shown a general disposition to settle with their landlords. There are many indications that the League is losing ground. Considerable irritation has been displayed at headquarters with reference to the lukewarmness of some of the branches, and threats have been made of dissolving those which are not meeting with sufficient regularity, and inaugurating new ones in their place, while the officers at some of the local meetings have animadverted strongly on the apathy of both the farmers and labourers. Boycotting, too,

\* Shortly after this was written the Plan of Campaign was promulgated, and the country once more plunged in turmoil and confusion.

is diminishing even in some of the worst localities, and the people generally seem heartily sick of the agitation. "In God's name, sir, when are they going to put us down?" is a remarkable saying that I heard of the other day; while another man was no less happy in illustrating the meaning of coercion "Coercion!" he said, "Sure, what is it but allowing a decent man to walk the road?" It is to be hoped, however, that the League may be induced to die a natural death, as so many other movements in Ireland have done. The time for suppressing it was at the beginning, whereas now such a step might only give a stimulus to the agitation and bring in money from abroad. "If only the people were left alone"—that is the cry I have heard repeated again and again in every part of the country. The boycotters and outragemongers are a small minority, and the mass of the people are well disposed, if only they are left alone.

I have heard very little about Home Rule during my tour, still less about local self-government, and it is difficult to say what is to be gained by passing any such measure at the present time. Ireland is suffering from over legislation, and what she wants is to be left alone. She wants rest; she wants to be left alone alike by political agitators and *doctrinaire* statesmen; she wants time to recover

from the throes through which she has passed, and that her people should devote themselves to industry instead of agitation. The principles which should underlie an Irish policy were well indicated in a charge addressed by the late Mr. Justice Day to the Grand Jury of Kerry in 1811, when the state of that county appears to have been very much what it is at present :—

On the one hand, an ear ever open to the distresses of the people and a heart ever ready to relieve them; on the other hand, a strict and parental constraint over their excesses, and an unbending execution of the law, without respect to religious sect or political party. Such a course would insure a full ascendancy over the ardent and inflammable but generous and flexible minds of the Irish peasantry, and win from them a willing submission to the discipline of the law.

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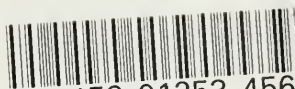
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